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**PRESIDENT OF THE ASSOCIATION** Dr. Benjamin I. Guansing writes:

### **WE HAVE A JOB TO DO**

The job of theological education is a big task in South-East Asia. We are in the midst of varied cultural heritages, a new up-surge of industrialization, a big demand for trained leadership, a laity newly awakened to its responsibilities in the church, a new theological understanding of the meaning of the church and its mission in our present day world, the seeming threat of communism, the variety of languages in which we have to conduct our work and a demand for the re-orientation of all of our program to meet conditions presently existing.

These are some of the problems that surround us. We certainly have a job to do.

Our South-East Asia Association of Theological Schools is in a strategic area of the world. Through this association we are called upon to witness more fully in all phases of Christian living. We often speak of the evangelistic approach of the church in terms of "*koinonia*," "*kerygma*," and "*diakonia*." Each of these three indicates in a graphic form how the church must approach our present day world in the power of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The strengthening of our work will depend also on the extent of our orientation to our various cultures. The demand of the day is to see that theological seminaries be completely involved in the spiritual and other ministries to the whole man, to the whole of life and to the whole world.

I greet you in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord in whose name we conduct our various activities.

## THE S.E. ASIA JOURNAL OF THEOLOGY.

A QUARTERLY

being the organ of the Association  
of Theological Schools in S.E. Asia

Editor: John Fleming

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# Editorial

This is the first issue of the Journal, and a word about its main purposes is in order.

It is first of all the Journal of the Association of Theological Schools in South East Asia, and intended to be a means of communication among them. The Association has been "in process of formation" since the Bangkok Conference of 1956, and more definitely since the Singapore meeting of Principals following the First Study Institute in July-August 1957. One of the functions of the Association, as discussed at Bangkok was to 'help towards an understanding of common needs and problems of theological colleges in Southeast Asia by the creation of a journal of Theological Education for South East Asia.'

Now this Bangkok dream is becoming a reality, and 'The South East Asia Journal of Theology' offers itself to the constituency of our Theological Colleges and Schools, and to the Churches, as a means whereby we can become better acquainted with one another. In this way, we shall be part of a wider movement that is one of the most significant aspects in the life of the churches in East Asia today—the process of mutual understanding, exchange of personnel, inter-church aid, and co-operation in the common task of evangelism, that is clearly represented in the East Asia Christian Conference.

To carry out this policy of 'becoming acquainted' we particularly invite the co-operation of the faculties of the South East Asia Theological Schools and Colleges to share their thinking, and their problems with one another. Although South East Asia is scarcely a well-defined entity, in spite of the increasing use of the term, and from the point of view of theological education presents problems as varied as those of the mountain churches of the Formosan aborigines, the Sea Dyaks or Ibans of Sarawak, and the sophisticated city dwellers of Singapore and Manila, yet most of the basic theological problems faced at present by the various theological institutions, are very similar. Insights and information from one school to another will be of great practical value, and the stimulation of thinking theologically together in a journal like this could do much to further the growth of an 'indigenous' Asian theology.

Another function appropriate to a journal of theology is the reviewing of books, and as far as our resources go, and publishers co-operate, we plan to carry a section of book reviews and book

notices. We shall try to mention in this way significant books that should be in the libraries of all our theological schools. These will be 'theological' books in the accepted sense, but we shall try also to bring to our readers' notice books on the sociological and religious situation of this area. We shall do this for two reasons. Firstly, because we believe theological education in this part of the world has, in recent years, not been dealing adequately with this question of the environment of the church in Asia; and secondly because the effective 'sowing of the seed' of the Word in Asia, requires as much scientific knowledge of the 'soils', as is demanded of an effective sugar-planter in the Philippines, or a rubber planter in Malaya.

This first issue has in view the Second Theological Study Institute to be held in Singapore in July-August this year, when the field of study will be 'Biblical Theology'. If we get sufficient co-operation from contributors, particularly though not exclusively, those working in this area of South East Asia—we plan to issue the Journal quarterly. This plan is made possible through the support of the Nanking Board of Founders, New York, and we acknowledge that help gladly and gratefully.

In terms of the symbol on our cover, we exist to serve the crown rights of the crucified and risen Lord in South East Asia in the vital area of theological education, and we invite all concerned to share in that service.

J. R. F.

"The world is sometimes enemy, sometimes partner of Church, often antagonist, always one to be befriended; now it is the co-knower, now the one that does not know what Church knows, now the knower of what Church does not know. . . .

To train men for the ministry of the Church is to train them for ministry to the world and to introduce them to the conversation of Church and world, a conversation in which both humility and self-assurance have their proper place."

H. Richard Niebuhr. *The Purpose of the Church and its Ministry.*

# Association of Theological Schools in South East Asia

FIRST REGULAR MEETING SCHEDULED FOR JULY 13—15  
1959 AT TRINITY THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE, SINGAPORE.

Beginning on the evening of Monday 13th July, and continuing through the morning of Wednesday the 15th, the Presidents of Theological Seminaries, Colleges or Schools (or their representatives) in South East Asia will be meeting for the first regular meeting of the Association, which was provisionally set up after the First Theological Study Institute in August 1957. They will represent some twenty Theological Schools in eight countries, Formosa, Philippines, Hongkong, Thailand, Burma, Malaya and Singapore, Borneo and Indonesia.

The Chairman of the Association is Dr. Benjamin Guansing, President of Union Theological Seminary, Manila, and the secretary is Dr. Ivy Chou, Principal of the Methodist Theological School at Sibu, Sarawak.

The initial planning for such an "Association" took place at the 'Conference on Theological Education in Southeast Asia' held in Bangkok, Thailand in February—March, 1956 under the joint auspices of the East Asia Secretariat of IMC-WCC, and the Nanking Board of Founders, and with the leadership of Dr. Rajah B. Manikam (now Bishop Manikam), and Dr. C. Stanley Smith.

The Bangkok Conference received the following report:

"It was agreed that an *Association of Theological Schools and Colleges in South East Asia* would be valuable on the following grounds:

1. It could help in matters of accreditation and the working out of standards.
2. It could help to improve the standards of all theological schools so that they meet the requirements for accreditation.
3. It could help to interchange professors and students for mutual benefit and enlargement of experience.

4. It could help towards an understanding of common needs and problems of theological colleges in S.E. Asia, i.e.—
  - (a) the production of bibliographies of the text books and other available teaching materials,
  - (b) the creation of a journal of Theological Education for South East Asia;
  - (c) the defining of the chief areas of concern in S.E. Asia so that more relevant teaching may be given in theological colleges.
  - (d) the fostering of local self support in the colleges.
  - (e) the development of subsidiary national associations of theological colleges where needed.
5. It could help to voice appeals to the WCC and IMC for the needs of theological education in S.E. Asia.

In consideration of these values *the following resolutions* were submitted to the conference.

- I. That as a step preliminary to the formation of an Association of Theological Colleges in S.E. Asia, an Association of Principals of Theological Schools and Colleges in S.E. Asia be formed.
- II. That all Principals of Schools and Colleges in S.E.A. present at this Conference be asked to meet and form such an Association.
- III. That after this Association of Principals is formed it should take steps to prepare a draft constitution for an Association of Theological Schools and Colleges in S.E. Asia. This draft constitution should then be submitted to the Schools and Colleges for discussion, alteration, amendment or rejection. If there is a favourable response, the Association of Principals should then take steps to turn itself into an Association of Theological Schools and Colleges in S.E. Asia."

At the Singapore meeting in 1957, a draft constitution was prepared, and has since been submitted to the Theological Schools and Colleges in the area. The following excerpt from the draft constitution gives the name of the Association, its purposes, and membership:

### **I. Name**

The name of this organization is the Association of Theological Schools in Southeast Asia, or ATS in abbreviation.

### **II. Purposes**

The purposes of the Association are:

- (1) To provide facilities for its members to confer concerning matters of common interest related to theological schools.

- (2) To consider any problems that may arise as to the relations of such institutions to one another or other educational institutions.
- (3) To recommend standards of theological education and maintain a list of member institutions on the basis of such standards.
- (4) To promote the improvement of theological education in such ways as it may deem appropriate.

### **III. Membership**

1. The membership of the Association of Theological Schools in Southeast Asia shall consist of institutions engaged in education and training for the Christian ministry in Southeast Asia. There shall be three types of members:

- (a) **Accredited Members** shall be the institutions which have been elected as such by the Association upon the recommendation of the Commission on Accreditation.
- (b) **Associate Members** shall be institutions which are not accredited, but which meet the conditions prescribed by the Association and which have been elected as such by the Association upon the recommendation of the Commission on Accreditation.
- (c) **Affiliated Members** shall be the institutions which have met the conditions prescribed by the Association and which have been elected to affiliated membership for fraternal purposes by the Executive Committee without reference to procedures of Accreditation.

2. **Dues.** Each member institution, whether accredited, associate or affiliated, shall pay annual dues as prescribed by the Association.

The agenda for the July meeting has not yet been finalised, but will include the question of standards and accreditation, and consideration of the recommendations from the Theological Librarians' Workshop held in February at Silliman University, Dumaguete City, on the island of Negros, Philippines. An important subject for discussion will be the possibility of establishing a system of external examinations for which all the Theological schools may present candidates for a Bachelor of Theology or Bachelor of Divinity degree. A full report of this important meeting will appear in a later issue of the Journal.

# The Second Theological Study Institute For South East Asia

Singapore 15th July till 28th August, 1959.

This second Institute, like the first one held in 1957, is being sponsored by the Association of Theological Schools in S.E. Asia, and by the Nanking Board of Founders. Participants in the Institute will be the teachers in the Biblical field, Old Testament, New Testament, and Biblical Theology from about twenty theological schools in the area.

The general theme of the Institute will be "The People of God in the World", and the Faculty will be President Kawada, of Union Theological Seminary, Tokyo, Professor James Muilenburg of Union Theological Seminary, New York, and Professor Paul Minear of Yale Divinity School, New Haven. The Dean of Studies will be Principal C. H. Huang of Tainan Theological College, and the Director of the Study Institute Programme in S.E. Asia is the Rev. J. R. Fleming, Field Representative of the Nanking Board of Founders.

President Kawada will give a series of lectures that will deal with the present theological situation in Japan, particularly as this relates to Biblical theology, while Professors Muilenburg and Minear will deal with the Old Testament and New Testament respectively.

The tentative list of subjects that will be discussed is as follows:

## OLD TESTAMENT:

The Peculiar Problems of a Biblical Theology.

The Biblical View of "Time". Israel's life lived in time.

Memory and Expectation.

Israel and History.

a. Israel in the midst of the world.

b. The Lord of history.

c. The people of history.

**The People of God:** The covenant at Sinai with special reference to Exodus 19-24.

- a. The called, chosen, redeemed, holy and responsible people.
- b. The proclamation and exhortation: *kerugma* and *didache*.
- c. Interpretation of the significance of the covenant.

**The Word of God:** in history, creation, call, the eschatological word, etc.

**Israel and the Nations:** an examination of the major contexts, e.g. Genesis 12: 1-3 and its culmination, Israel in the conquest, in the monarchy, the prophetic message (esp. Amos 1-2), and the nations in Second Isaiah.

**The God of Israel and the Nations.**

- a. The Holy God and the Holy People.
- b. The sovereignty of God. God is King.
- c. God as Father.

**The Mission of Israel:** the origins of this motif and its development.

- a. Mosaic religion.
- b. Israel as Witness.
- c. Israel's particularism and universality.

**The People of the Way:** what some people still call O.T. "ethics"

**Eschatology:** here concentrate chiefly on Second Isaiah (Isa. 40-55).  
also the *Servant of the Lord*. See Wheeler Robinson's essay on corporate personality. This is an assignment for all participants.

**Worship:** the life of prayer and praise; the nations.

## **NEW TESTAMENT:**

**The Church and Society in Sociological and Theological Perspectives.**

Time, Space and Number in N.T. Thinking about the Church.

Modes of Imagination, Ancient and Modern.

The Church as the People of God.

The People of God as a New Creation.

The New Creation as a Fellowship in Faith.

The Fellowship in Faith as the Body of Christ.

Christ as Head of the Body.

Christ as Head of All Things.

Particularism and Universalism in the Church.

The Present and the Future in the Church.

Images of the Church and the Mission of the Church to Society.

### BOOKS RECOMMENDED BY PROFESSOR MUILENBURG.

#### (a) Theologies of the Old Testament:

Vriezen (Dutch, German and English).

L. Koehler (German and English).

Edmond Jacob (French and English).

Eichrodt, Procksch and von Rad (German).

#### (b) Other books. Those marked with asterisks are specially picked out.

\*Johannes Pedersen, Israel: its Life and Culture (2 vols.)

\*G. E. Wright, God Who Acts; also Biblical Archaeology.

\*H. Wheeler Robinson, Inspiration and Revelation in the Old Testament.

H. H. Rowley, Doctrine of Election.

Interpreter's Bible (I, II, V).

Zimmerli and Jeremias. The Servant of God (from Kittel's Woerterbuch) in Studies in Theology series.

Martin Buber, The Prophetic Faith.

\*Mowinckel, He That Cometh.

\*W. F. Albright, From Stone Age to Christianity.

\*Dahl, Das Volk Gottes.

Eissfeldt, Einleitung in das A.T. Second edition (or possibly Pfeiffer?\*).

Kittel's *Theologisches Woerterbuch zum Neuen Testament*.

Vols. I-V and the early fascicles of VI).

Kittel's Bible Key Words, translated and edited by J. R. Coates and Henry P. Kingdon.

### BOOKS RECOMMENDED BY PROFESSOR MINEAR:

#### (a) Background Reading:

Richardson and Schweitzer: Biblical Authority for Today.

R. Bultmann: N. T. Theology.

E. Stauffer: N. T. Theology.

O. Cullmann: Christology.

\*A. Richardson: Introduction to N. T. Theology.

\*C. Welch: Reality of the Church.

#### (b) For use at Institute:

J. A. T. Robinson, The Body; E. Best, One Body in Christ;

Minear, Jesus and His People.

R. N. Flew, The Church (Lund Conference Volume); Minear, Horizons of Christian Community (Bethany Press 1959); WCC Study Document, 1958, The Lordship of Christ over the Church and the World.

The Oberlin Conference volume: The Nature of the Unity We Seek, (Bethany Press, 1958).

The general plan of the Institute is to combine lectures with seminars in which the delegates will deal with various aspects of Biblical Theology in relation to the thinking of people in the countries of S.E. Asia, where generally the non-Christian religions have left their own legacy of world-view, thought-forms and instinctive attitudes. In this way, it is hoped there can be a real 'encounter', between prevalent ways of life and thought and Biblical thinking.

"Wherever and whenever there has been intense intellectual activity in the Church a theological school has arisen, while institutions possession the external appearance of such schools but devoid of reflective life have quickly revealed themselves as training establishments for the habituation of apprentices in the skills of a clerical trade rather than as theological schools."

"Wherever the theological student is at work he is challenged—at very least by those most catholic of teachers, the competent librarians—to enter into conversation with a continuous if not identical group of thinkers." H. Richard Niebuhr. *The Purpose of the Church and its Ministry*.

# **South East Asia Theological Librarians' Workshop**

**at the College of Theology, Silliman University, Dumaguete City,  
Philippines.**

This workshop was attended by nineteen librarians or acting librarians from fifteen theological colleges or schools in Southeast Asia, from February 9th to 27th, under the auspices of the Association of Theological Schools in S.E.A., and the Nanking Board of Founders. The Director of the Workshop was Dr. Raymond P. Morris, the Librarian of Yale Divinity School Library, assisted by Mrs. Raquel B. Cabanilla, Librarian of Union Theological Seminary, Manila.

All who attended this workshop were unanimous in praise of its practical value, and the help received in technical library problems of classification, book stock, cataloguing, book preservation, circulation etc. A number of recommendations arising from the discussions at Dumaguete will be presented to the meeting of the Association in July, in Singapore. These deal with standards; finance and budgets; suggestions for improving the basic book stock; the need for more books of good scholarship in good, simple English, cheaply produced, for text-books and collateral reading; plans to encourage Asian writers; and recommendations about the circulation of books to graduates and ministers in the field.

A full report of this workshop has been prepared by the Nanking Board Field Representative, and can be had from him at 6 Mt. Sophia, Singapore 9. Thanks are due to Raymond Morris for his leadership in this course, which has made clear some very definite ways in which the standards of theological training can be raised, and given the Association some clear indications of a policy to be followed in this basic aspect of theological education.

# From The Report

## Western Influences v. Indigenous Patterns.

It was agreed that there was too great Western influence on the patterns of theological education in the area. This could be seen in specific instances. On the other hand, there was great educational and ecumenical value where many influences were brought together in one school combining, for example as at Siantar, contributions from Indonesia, India, Germany, Holland and England. It was agreed further that theological education in S.E. Asia, while using the experience and traditions of universal Christianity, and firmly based on the eternal gospel of God in Jesus Christ, must be allowed to develop in ways that meet the needs of the church and ministry in the area. It must be inspired more and more by the theological thinking of Asian leaders confronted by Asia's religious and sociological challenges and so be led to more indigenous patterns in the expression of the gospel, both in thought and in life. For example, in the field of apologetics, or of relating Christianity to contemporary thought in Asia, there seemed a danger in some of our schools that theological education be conducted without directly relating it to the ferment of religious, social and political thought that is typical of this area today.

## Higher Theological Faculty in Asia.

A more specific problem also raised at this time, as at Bangkok in 1956, was the question of a Higher Theological Faculty in Asia. Our discussion at Silliman University probably did not take this matter much further, but the following points are included here for what they are worth:

(1) Such a centre should develop naturally from some existing school. It was noted that the Sekolah Tinggi Theologia, Djakarta, was now in a position to offer advanced degrees in theology.

(2) In the present situation of our schools, it was reasonable to think of different schools developing areas of special studies and offering special facilities for higher study in particular fields.

For example, Islam might be a special feature at S.T.T., Djakarta, or Chinese religious thought at Tainan, and so on. Students would be attracted to different places according to their interests and needs, and the ability of the schools to meet them.

(3) The men needed to staff a Higher Theological Faculty would be just those Asian theologians and teachers most needed to make theological education effective in the various countries. To draw such men to a Higher Theological Faculty might well be calamitous.

(4) Financing would have to be largely from the West and this would make the centre economically vulnerable.

(5) The H.T.F. would have to attract students against the competition and attractions of post graduate study in the West. Probably students would not be satisfied unless degrees were offered. Though this is fundamentally irrelevant to the kind of training it would be hoped to offer at the Higher Theological Faculty, it is nevertheless a factor to be recognised in Asia today where higher degrees earned in the West can command high respect.

(6) Regarding the library implications of such a plan, it was thought that for an adequate library the amounts required would be much greater than the figures mentioned at Bangkok. It was thought that they would be more in the region of US\$20,000 for an initial 'block grant' and US\$5,000 per annum for the initial five years.

### **The Librarians' Calling.**

"Not only do we work with the intangible things of the spirit, but there is the tangible thing itself—the book and the collection which frame our efforts with a monument rich because it has been built by many hands from many countries over many ages. For these are not just dirty old tomes which have outlived their usefulness. Here are Plato, Aristotle, Augustine, Aquinas, Luther, Calvin, Wesley, Kierkegaard, Barth and others, a veritable apostolic succession of culture. Here indeed is a communion of Saints. Here speak Amos, Isaiah and Jeremiah. Here is Job. If we listen we can hear the intonation of the Psalmists and the noble preaching of Paul.

Here is the tenderness of Francis of Assisi, the "dark night" of John of the Cross, Bunyan and his pilgrim, and Brother Lawrence serving God by wiping the pots and pans in the kitchen. Here is the horror of the Inquisition, the courage of the crusader, Damien and his lepers, Schweitzer and his healing in Lambaréne. What vitality and what power! Here in the Holy Scriptures are found the words of our Master, presented with pristine eloquence by the un-failing page of the printed book and there they stand, these books, with patience and modesty, waiting for the curious mind and the pilgrim soul—an unmeasured potential of human experience and wisdom, waiting to be introduced by us, their guardians and custo-

dians and teachers, to these our times. What an opportunity for one if he is able! What nobler monument could we desire?

Nor is this an idle flight of fancy and rhetoric concocted for this occasion. We are not drunken by the wine of our profession. We have no reason to discount the importance of our task. Rather, you and I run the danger of underestimating the importance of our task. We are not called forth to do something which is on the periphery of human interest and human need. We are dealing with the very heart of human experience, with the stuff that lies at the centre of civilization and culture. This is why our work is so everlasting important. In the noise and confusion of a troubled time, we work with the wisdom of the ages and we are moved by the conviction that "what is highest in spirit is always deepest in nature, that the ideal and the real are at least to some extent identified, nor merely evanescently in our lives, but enduring in the Universe itself". That this most high glory is within the reach of the most lowly is the substance of our work as teachers and librarians in the Kingdom of Jesus Christ."

*From the opening address at the Workshop,*  
by RAYMOND P. MORRIS.

### The Functions of a Theological School.

A theological school's first task is to be a centre of study and thought. This cannot be overemphasised. The church everywhere, and certainly no less in S.E. Asia than elsewhere, is faced with many fundamental problems of life and witness which need careful study and deep thought. These the theological school must do all it can to supply. It should therefore possess a staff of men and women sufficiently trained and able to be a spearhead of the church's thinking. The members of the staff should be willing to devote themselves to this task irrespective of any teaching duties they may have, and, in a sense, independently of them—they should form a studying, thinking community.

The problems which demand this thought are very many and widely varied, but basically they all come to this: what is God's will for His people, here and now? Or, in other words, what ought the church to say and do in the situation in which it is set? Or again, What for us Christians today is good, what evil, what the way of life?

We do not seek the answer to such questions merely by some direct mystical path. Our God is eternal and unchanging and has

already revealed Himself in Christ, in the Scriptures and in the church. We must seek Him there. And even there we can only hope to understand aright if we include in our Biblical and historical studies the setting into which the word was spoken.

On the basis of these studies we must then formulate what it is necessary for us here and now to believe about God and man (our doctrine), how we ought to worship Him (liturgics), how we ought to behave to others (ethics), how we ought to witness to Him, how we ought to organise the church and so on. Nor can we hope to find His will in these things without a knowledge of today's world, in which His purpose is to be shown.

Yet this search for God's will cannot be a purely intellectual activity. There must be a complete devotion of individuals and of the studying community to God, expressed in and nourished by the daily prayer and worship of the school, and guaranteed by the spiritual fruits of love, joy, peace and the rest, as found in its daily life.

However, this studying, worshipping community does not exist for itself but for the welfare and 'edification' of the church. It must give to the church and to the world whatever God reveals to it; and this in many ways. For example, the theological school can serve the church at large through the publication of books and articles, through lectures at church conferences and meetings of all types and through participation in the discussions taking place in church courts and committees. It can also help to confront the world outside with the church's message through writing and speaking.

But perhaps most important of all is the task traditionally assigned to theological schools, that of training those who are to undertake special ministries in the church. What exactly these special ministries are which the churches of S.E. Asia need today is a question largely being decided by default and by imitating the stereotype of classical western Protestantism; but this is a matter too large to include here.

The theological teacher should try then to impart to the students the results of his own thinking as well as the bases and processes of thought which have led him to them. He should introduce the students to the thought of others in different countries and ages, so that through their own reading they may enter the community of Christian thinking. The teacher should also give the students opportunity to ask their own questions, express their own problems,

formulate their own conclusions and generally carry on a "dialogue" of study with their teachers.

This process of learning must of course be set in the same context of life and worship referred to already. The theological "school" must also be a "congregation" of God's people in its corporate life and its witness to the world outside its gates.

The school's aim in leadership training must be to provide men and women sufficiently mature to be able to continue to grow in living and thinking without supervision after they have graduated. At the same time the relationship between teacher and taught should be preserved as much as possible even though its character changes. The school must not lose interest, but be ready to help those in the pastoral ministry as need arises. The theological school remains a "member" of the church of Christ.

*From a talk given at the Workshop,  
by BORIS ANDERSON, Tainan.*

"There is no other way to learn, organize and apprehend experience, think and speak Christianly, than by long and continuous participation in the life of the Biblical communities. In this conversation with those who being dead yet speak we learn the logic as well as the language of the community that centers in God. Whatever the discontinuities between Israel and the early Church on the one hand, the modern Church on the other so far as their participation in natural, cultural and political events go, fundamental continuity prevails so far as divine-human and inter-human relations before God are concerned." H. Richard Niebuhr. *The Purpose of the Church and its Ministry.*

# Recent Trends In Old Testament Interpretation

DR. CHR. BARTH.

The purpose of this contribution is by no means to give an original survey of what is going on in the field of O.T. study and interpretation. For readers interested in such a survey I refer to H. H. Rowley's "*The Old Testament and Modern Study*", Oxford 1951.

The editor has asked me to treat some recent trends in O.T. study which might be of importance for the development of Theological Education in S.E. Asia today. We will have, therefore, to throw a glance first of all at the present situation in the field of O.T. teaching as we face it in our region. The disquieting features of this situation will lead us to the question whether there are some trends in recent O.T. study which might turn out to be helpful, or which might even urge us to revise our present teaching practices. The final reflections are meant to give some suggestions about possible ways of application.

## 1. O.T. teaching in S.E. Asia today.

Wherever the O.T. is held to be Holy Scripture, theological schools and seminaries may be supposed to do O.T. teaching. Our region is no exception in this case. According to their relative standards, training institutions do it more or less intensively, but most of them deal with O.T. instruction throughout their curriculum, as was proved at the Bangkok Conference on Theological Education in S.E. Asia, 1956.

It is generally agreed that the training we provide should be as thorough and good as possible. We cannot expect, on the other hand, that all our institutions are in a position to provide a full scale O.T. instruction programme including introduction, Hebrew, interpretation and theology. Only a small minority of our students has the basic education needed for this, and—what is more important—the Churches of our region are looking primarily for ministers of a type different from that of a scientifically trained theologian.

Consequently, when speaking about an O.T. training "as thorough and good as possible", I am not aiming at an ideal of the ministry's educational standard, where every minister would have gone through the full scale programme mentioned above—besides the corresponding training of the B.D. standard. I think a training programme of any standard is "thorough and good", as far as it answers the real needs of the Churches' ministry.

What, then, are the real needs of the ministry of the Churches in our region—as far as the O.T. is concerned? What is the O.T. expected to do for the Churches' life and growth and mission? What purpose is it hoped our O.T. training will serve in the average minister's duty and function? The answer is not so easy as it might seem!

Granted that the Churches maintain the O.T. as an integral part of the Holy Scriptures, we should think the O.T. would be valued as the channel or,—according to the fundamentalist view—the treasure of God's Living Word for Church and World. This granted, we should think the Churches would need ministers equipped for the task of preaching God's Living Word according to O.T. texts,—O.T. texts in the light of their fulfilment in the N.T. of course—but still, according to O.T. texts. We could conclude then, that an O.T. training programme answering the Churches' need, should equip future ministers to preach the Gospel, based on and according to the voice of the O.T.

Now, is this really what the Churches of our region feel is their need? Do they expect their ministers to be prepared for this task, and are they—the local Churches, gathered for Sunday service—willing and hoping to hear the Gospel in its O.T. form of appearance, i.e. as a word mainly concerning and concerned with Israel, a nation they can hardly imagine as people of flesh and blood, still living in this time and in this world?

I would not dare to doubt this generally and for the whole of our region. As far as the Indonesian archipelago is concerned, I think the Churches have a rather poor knowledge about the O.T.'s real function in their life. They know the Patriarch tales, the Ten Commandments and some Psalms, but they almost never have the chance to listen to a sermon or to join a bible study class on some section of the O.T. Their ministers have received an O.T. training, yet this training does not—or only exceptionally does—equip them for the central task of preaching the Good News about how God created the world, elected and freed Israel, appointed David to

be His anointed one, judged and forgave sin etc. They can rarely use it except for narrative and moralistic aims, e.g. in Sunday school and catechism. A similar picture of the situation was given by G. E. Phillips, *The O.T. in the World Church*, 1942.

Here then is the question I want to put forward to my colleagues engaged in theological education. What is the target we are aiming at with our O.T. training programmes? Do we confine ourselves to the task of providing the historic background necessary to understand the New Testament? Are we satisfied when our students pass the final examinations with a fairly good knowledge of the O.T. tales and their moral meaning? Or—suppose we really mean to prepare them for their preaching task—are we aware of the almost total failure of our efforts up to now?

## 2. How we got where we are.

Those who think with me that we are in a deadlock today, will naturally ask for some suggestions how to overcome it. However, it would be unwise to look for medicine before trying to trace the roots of the trouble.

What I have called a deadlock is not, of course, of today or yesterday. Within the whole of theological education in S.E. Asia—as performed, say, in the past 50 years—the O.T. teaching probably never made a strong case. The Churches of this region never heard anything different from what they hold now. They inherited the orthodox evaluation of the O.T. as an integral part of the Holy Scriptures, but in its practical use they never considered it as more than an introductory book of merely paedagogical value. We may not be surprised, if they seem satisfied with the type of minister we train for them—as far as the O.T. is concerned!

I don't think it would be fair to make the Asian Churches responsible for the present malaise. They got their heritage from abroad, more precisely, from the type of Western Christianity developed in the 19th and 20th century. Their evaluation of the O.T. is almost identical with what we are used to meeting in Western Churches—Churches with a long tradition behind them, and well staffed theological faculties at their service and disposition! Yet, with all the tradition, with all the pious fervour and laborious skill spent on the matter, Western Christianity never really succeeded in owning and maintaining the O.T. as its Holy Scripture in the full sense. No wonder, if the younger Churches, grown as a consequence of missionary activity, did not succeed either. There is some bitter truth

in Martin Buber's saying: "Primitive Christianity gained the pagans, but it lost Israel and the promise given to it".

The causes of this failure must be sought in the general trend of O.T. study within Western Christianity. We are still waiting for a history of the Church written as the history of the Church's struggle to master the problem of the O.T. Such a book will probably contain more than one brilliant page, but I am afraid as a whole it will be the history of desperate attempts. The way the apologists handled their allegorisms, the spiritual and moral interpretation of Church fathers and scholastics, the O.T.'s use as an arsenal of proof-texts meant to corroborate the truth of Christian dogmatics—all this could hardly give room for the O.T.'s own message.

A great improvement was to come, when—towards the end of the 18th century—O.T. study developed as an independent branch of Christian theology. Romanticism and the rising interest in historic, literary and linguistic research helped men to understand the O.T. as a world of its own, and archaeology brought in a harvest exceeding even the keenest expectations.

As a result of this revolution, students of the O.T. split into two major groups. On one side, modernist scholars pursued their research wherever it would lead, taking the risk of losing their faith—and dissolving other people's faith—in the O.T. as Holy Scripture. On the other side, conservative scholars defended the traditional position, refuting or rebuffing the critics as long as they could. The tension between the parties became the more and more serious. It seemed irreconcilable. In reality, with all this zealous discussion, both contending groups had decisive things in common. Both sides tried to save the O.T.'s face by insisting on its moral and religious values, or by recommending it as necessary introduction to the Gospel. Neither of them succeeded in giving the Churches' faith in the O.T. a persuasive demonstration. With a few exceptions, leftist scholars stayed inconsequently sitting on their theological chairs, making O.T. study a tumblestone of faith for generations of future ministers. The conservatives upheld the Churches' faith, but usually could not answer the questions raised by excavations and critical research.

Seen at a distance, both groups had their obvious weaknesses, though we may never overlook the vital interests defended by each of them. Anyway, Western Christianity was not in a state to transfer the O.T. to the younger Churches in such a way that they could have understood its true meaning and function.

### 3. Recent trends.

The long struggle however does not seem to have been futile. There are signs, after all, which seem to prove that we live on the eve of a new and promising development of O.T. interpretation. Historic and literary criticism have lead—some 40 years ago—to a concentrated study of the literary forms and, more recently, of the oral traditions behind the O.T. texts.

It was along these lines of research that German scholars like Gerhard von Rad and Martin Noth came to know about the existence of some old Israelitic creeds, confession-like formulas of Israel's faith, dating in their oldest forms back far behind the time of the kingdom. In a lucidly written booklet entitled "God Who Acts" (1952), G. Ernest Wright has explained the fundamental significance of this finding for the whole of O.T. interpretation and theology. Moreover, G. von Rad himself has recently published the first part of his Theology of the O.T. (1958)—a work that will soon prove to be a milestone on the way towards an O.T. regained for its proper function. (An English translation is in preparation, SCM Press, London).

The discovery of these old creeds—e.g., Deut 26:5-9 and 6:21-23—is of great importance for our knowledge concerning the essence and contents of Israel's faith. The latter did not consist—it seems—of a series of more or less peculiar ideas about God, creation, man, sin and salvation, but rather of a hymnic recital summing up the great saving facts, i.e. God's mighty and wondrous interventions in man's history. Israel's faith was a summary of the Good News, of what God has done.

But this is not all. There is sufficient evidence to show that these creeds were the nucleus of what we now call the O.T. writings. The historic books—primarily the Pentateuch and Joshua—appear to be nothing else than a collection of traditions expanding the capital items of the creed. As the creed was successively completed—backwards to the creation, forwards to the catastrophe and renovation of the old covenant—the collection of traditions too widened and increased up to its present contents. Even the canon of the later prophets and of the wisdom literature can be said to have gathered around the basic creed.

This would mean that the O.T. does not only contain some interesting old creeds, but is essentially based on them. The O.T. would then represent an expression and explanation, in various forms, of Israel's faith, which we have learned to know as a recital of God's

saving deeds in history. Speaking inversely, the discovery of the old creeds would give us a new key to the O.T., an approach to the very heart of these writings, and therefore a fresh start for interpretation and theology. To be sure, the O.T. is a collection of material of the most various types—legislative, prophetic, contemplative, doctrinal, historic, narrative etc. besides the hymnal praise of God's deeds; yet the former would all be rooted in the latter, and would have to be interpreted as its explication and application.

In the light of the new findings, the O.T. does not only contain some elements of the Gospel. It is in itself good tidings. As a document witnessing to God's action, it cannot fail to announce God's unrelenting judgment over man's obstruction; yet, above all, it announces the victory of God's faithfulness in the past as in the future. To understand the O.T. as Law in contrast to the N.T. as Gospel, has become definitely obsolete. The N.T. is nothing but the good news about the completion (fulfilment) of the Gospel to which Israel's Holy Scriptures witness.

There is good reason to believe that this new approach will bring important progress to the efforts of all those concerned with the O.T.'s return to the pulpit. There is no hope for such a return, unless we learn to understand the O.T. as the very Gospel which was to be fulfilled in Jesus Christ. As we meet this new challenge, the old front lines of liberal criticism against conservative dogmatism have ceased to be decisive; we will need the best forces of both sides!

#### 4. Suggestions for teaching practice.

Many things can be said about better methods of learning and teaching—the need for concentration, and for understandable books in the hands of our students, the urgency of more courses in thorough O.T. interpretation and the right relation between O.T. introduction and theology. Though everyone engaged in this branch of instruction will have to find his own way, it is still our duty to exchange the experiences we have had in our training institutions of various standards. The Bangkok conference hardly touched the problems involved in this.

Instead of venturing into a field too vast for general treatment, I would rather confine myself to some remarks in line with what has been said about recent trends in O.T. interpretation. As I was concentrating deliberately on one particular trend, so my remarks will do the same.

In short, I would recommend that we take notice of the fore-

mentioned writings by G. von Rad, and of Martin Noth's "Ueberlieferungsgeschichtliche Studien" (I, 1943 and II, 1948). Those who have no access to literature in German will get valuable information through G. E. Wright's *God Who Acts*. From a more special point of view, John Bright's *The Kingdom of God* (1953) is aiming at the same goal. Of course, these few titles can by no means replace the handbooks and commentaries needed for preparation. What they can do, is to make one rethink the whole course of one's efforts.

(a) If the O.T. has its base in a recital of God's deeds in history, then we have to give this full expression, both in interpretation and theology. Only on the basis and in the light of these *magnalia Dei* will the various parts of the O.T. show their true face, and turn out to be Gospel. We can no longer treat them as historic examples of religious and moral truths, nor can we go on to explain words, ideas, doctrines or even laws as independent, timeless items. We have to learn to read and interpret these texts according to the place they fill in the whole of Israel's creed.

O.T. theology, too, should be evolved in this direction. Courses on distinctive ideas or doctrines, even a survey on the history of Israel's religion may still be useful, and there are many handbooks on theology of this conventional type. Yet, it can be questioned whether our curriculum provides sufficient time for courses which, by their very nature, tend to treat the matter from a point of view taken from outside the O.T. writings. According to the new approach, the main thing to do would be to unfold the theology of the O.T. books one by one. Instead of building a system of ideas and doctrines, we should rather re-tell the story the O.T. gives, taking the credal formulas as trustworthy guides, and giving attention to the various theological trends represented in it. As far as I can see now, to follow the Jewish canon, i.e. to treat successively the theology of the Torah, the Former and the Later Prophets and the Writings is most to be recommended.

(b) My second remark concerns the right place and function of the New Testament fulfilment in our teaching practice. The problem of how to show forth the points of correspondence and concrete fulfilment between Old and New Testament has never been solved in a satisfactory way, nor can I offer a patent solution now. Nevertheless, I dare say the new approach gives a better understanding of the matter, and opens new perspectives along which we have to work.

What happened according to the N.T. writings, does not merely

fulfil some more or less explicit Messianic prophecies, nor is it merely related to certain O.T. ideas, doctrines, hopes or personages. In the light of the newly discovered creeds, the main correspondence should be sought in the essence of God's mighty deeds. Both Israel's and the Church's creeds consist in a series of such deeds, whose reciprocal correspondence is far more than a merely formal one. Even by understanding the O.T. facts as mere types or foreshadowings of the N.T. story, we would probably miss the point. In reality, the "old" and the "new" story are nothing less than parts of the one story about God's intervention in favour of man, which started in creation and was to be completed in the coming of Christ. If the O.T. facts were mere predictions, shadows or types of what would happen afterwards, then we could ultimately do without the O.T., having the N.T. as testimony to the decisive fulfilling fact at hand. In reality, of course the Church can never do without what happened according to the O.T. Where should we poor gentiles stand, if Israel's election, rejection and reconciliation did not really happen—for them and through them for us? To find that each item mentioned in the old creeds has its direct relation to the N.T. fulfilment, is a surprising and inspiring experience.

(c) Finally, something has to be said about the O.T.'s significance for the present time. If the O.T. has no message for the concrete issues of this our region, too, then we had better spend our time on something else. But it does have a message! It opens our eyes to see God's intervention in favour of man and so for what God does now—in the history of the peoples and in our personal lives as well.

Thinking along the lines opened up by the discovery of the old creeds, we cannot possibly apply the O.T. in a direct way to modern conditions. We are not in the same sense—as Israel was and still is—God's chosen people. Neither the ceremonial, nor the social, nor the moral nor any other type of O.T. law is directly applicable to our time. The same warning mark should be placed on the prophetic sayings about the days to come. Any attempt at direct application ends sooner or later in judaistic 'restitution', which can never build the Church.

When looking for the O.T.'s meaning for our time, we must keep in mind its character as witness to God's action in history. As the O.T.—together with its completion, witnessed to by the N.T.—explains *what* God did, it does at the same time explain *how* God acts. Of course, He acts freely, according to His sovereign will.

Still, He is always pursuing His plan regarding Israel and the whole of mankind. We should carefully avoid reducing God's will to general principles and norms, and concentrate on its concrete demonstrations as they are witnessed to by the biblical texts. The old creeds will help us to see these demonstrations in the right context of God's plan.

How can the O.T. be made "relevant"? How can it be used for and applied to our present time? In point of fact, these questions are not correct. We should rather ask them in a different way. How does it come about that the O.T. reveals its relevance, applies itself to our time, and what can we do in order to make this happen?

By asking the questions in this way, we are acknowledging that God alone can use and apply biblical texts so that they begin to speak authoritatively. We can never make this happen. But we can actively wait for it. Collecting the facts, trying to understand them in the context of God's plan, confronting them with our present situation, asking—and teaching our students to ask—for the same God's concrete will today—these are the necessary steps on a way of great promise, still new for most of us.

CHRISTOPH BARTH.  
*Sekolah Tinggi Theologia, Djakarta.*

"An intellectual centre of the Church's life which serves the purposes of theological activity necessarily has the form of a college, that is of a *collegium* or colleagueship. It is a community of students in communication with one another, with the common subjects or objects studied, and with companions of the past and present in like communication with the object. Every genuine school is such a society in which the movement of communication runs back and forth among the three—the teacher, the student and the common object. When communication is a one-way process, proceeding from an authoritative person to an immature learner who is not in direct relation to the object of the study, intellectual activity is at a minimum in both parties; such a school is not a community of students but a propaganda or indoctrination institution."

H. Richard Niebuhr. *The Purpose of the Church and its Ministry.*

# Thoughts In A Plane Over Hongkong, Easter Morning, 1959.

"There are refugees . . . lying on the pavements or squatting on the housetops in Hongkong". The Holy Tryst, Church of Scotland Prayer Union, Ninth Day.

He is not here. He is risen.  
Why seek the living among the dead?  
This is the song that goes up today  
In all corners of the earth:  
While the church is born once more  
To sing His word,  
The Word of Truth and Life.

Down there is the world of the dead among the living.  
The world for which He died  
That it might live;  
The world of huddled creatures on the pavements  
and the roof tops,  
The world of vaunting boasts, embattled words,  
The world of emptiness and vanity and suffering.  
God, yes, how much of suffering is there—  
The homeless and the dispossessed,  
The victims of man's lust and greed,  
His itch to get, and have and spend.

The cardboard shacks now sheltering  
Rags and bones from the chill bite of dawn,  
Once new and crisp and clean  
With packaged riches from another world,  
A world of vitamins and whole-meal flour and powdered milk,  
Now mock the struggle for the breath of life itself.

How shall these dead ones live?  
Why seek the living among the dead?  
And yet the word was spoken  
To become a shout through all the world:  
He is not here, but risen from the dead,  
    and so the dead shall live.  
How shall it be heard again, amid  
The clamour of such poverty and need,  
Save as that same love of God in Christ  
Is incarnate once more?  
No stuff of dreams, but dream of God come true,  
And men in Christ make real to men in need  
The suffering and triumphant love  
That died between two thieves  
And is alive for evermore.

JOHN FLEMING.

"When all is said and done the increase of this love of God and neighbour remains the purpose and the hope of our preaching of the gospel, of all our church organization and activity, of all our ministry, of all our efforts to train men for the ministry, of Christianity itself."

H. Richard Niebuhr. *The Purpose of the Church and its Ministry.*

REKTOR MRS. MANUPUTTY-MANUSAMA, Makassar,

writes about

## Geredja Kebangkitan

To all who visit the campus of the Sekolah Theologia, Makassar, this beautiful new house of worship, The Resurrection Chapel, is the first object of admiration.

It stands alone, almost directly in the centre of our grounds, set off by wide green lawns, and it has become, in the truest sense of the word, the heart and centre of our community life.

Each morning at 6.35 a.m. our student body of nearly one hundred, with the resident members of our faculty, gather in the chapel to begin the day in worship, and each night at 9.30 p.m., before the gong sounds for "lights out", the seminary family meets again in the chapel to end the day together in God's presence.

Since the day of its dedication on Easter Monday morning, 1957, it has become so integral a part of our daily life that it is difficult now to imagine our seminary without it.

The name, *Geredja Kebangkitan* (Resurrection Chapel), which was chosen some time before the building was completed, holds a special significance for us all. During the Passion week just prior to the dedication ceremony, one of our fine young First Year students, Lasama Laraga, of the Toradja Church in Central Sulawesi, was obliged to enter the hospital because of an infected wound on his foot. The doctors found that tetanus had already set in, and despite every human effort to save his life, Lasama died on Easter Sunday morning. His body was laid in our new chapel and throughout the remainder of Easter Sunday and all through the night our students stood watch around him, singing the beautiful hymns of triumphant, Christian faith. The people of this little Moslem village will not soon forget the clear testimony of that song-filled night. Early on Easter Monday morning, with the help of the Military Command which provided transportation facilities, our entire campus family, joined by many Christians from the city, brought Lasama's body to the Christian Cemetery, ten kilometres outside of Makassar.

Immediately upon our return from the funeral service we gathered again in our new Resurrection Chapel for a deeply meaningful dedication ceremony.

Each Sunday morning, after early worship, our chapel is again used for a public church service led by one of the ministers of the Makassar Protestant Churches. A large, new congregation has already been formed from among the families of Christian military personnel stationed in this area and from the people of an Ambonese settlement nearby. We trust that in time there may be some from this Moslem community in which we are located, who will be worshipping here too.

We, as an ecumenical Seminary Family, composed of students from 16 Indonesian tribes, and a faculty representing the Christians of four nations, express our deep gratitude to all who have given us our chapel, the schoolbuilding and faculty-houses; and may we ask everyone who reads this to pray with us that it may always be used to the glory of Christ our Risen Saviour.

"The result of two centuries of Biblical criticism, as this has affected the thought of the Church, has not been an impairment of the power of the Scriptures but it has been an increase of the sense of the communal character of the book. For this and other reasons the best Biblical preaching going on in the churches today undertakes to interpret the Word of God as a word spoken to Israel and the Church. The minister who is obedient to scriptures and represents its authority does so as one who is interpreting the mind of the community-before-God."

H. Richard Niebuhr. *The Purpose of the Church and its Ministry.*

# Recent Trends In New Testament Interpretation

DR. FRANK BALCHIN.

"What you don't understand is that . . . history as we know it now, began with Christ, and that Christ's Gospel is its foundation. Now what is history? It is the centuries of systematic explorations of the riddle of death, with a view to overcoming death."

The words might be from a New Testament theologian. They are in fact from Boris Pasternak's 'Dr. Zhivago'. Christ, His Gospel, history and the overcoming of death—these have been the main emphases of N.T. interpretation in recent decades.

## The Emphasis on Biblical Theology.

"Perhaps the noteworthy developments in the study of the New Testament have been in the field of Biblical Theology", writes Dr. Bruce Metzger.<sup>1</sup> "Whereas many scholars at the beginning of this century were eager to discover the special outlook and different emphases of the several authors of the N.T., lately interest has shifted from what might be termed an atomistic and centrifugal criticism to one which is concerned with what was central and organic in primitive Christianity." In other words, the current trend in N.T. interpretation is to go beyond questions of text, date and authorship to questions of ultimate meaning and interpretation.<sup>2</sup>

1. The 20th Century Encyclopaedia of Religious Knowledge, p.801.
2. See A. M. Hunter "Unity of the N.T."; Cunliffe Jones "Authority of the Biblical Revelation"; C. W. Dugmore (ed.) "The Interpretation of the Bible"; R. Richardson and W. Schwettzer (ed.) "Biblical Authority for Today". etc.

It is a significant fact that between G. B. Steven's "New Testament Theology" published in 1899 and F. C. Grant's "Introduction to New Testament Thought" in 1950 there was hardly a major work on New Testament Theology as a whole published in English. The reason, of course, was that the historicocritical approach to the N.T. had revealed such differences between the different books that most N.T. scholars gave up the task of writing N.T. Theology as impossible and contented themselves with monographs on different aspects of N.T. thought. The old dogmatic approach that took over the framework of systematic theology and filled it out with Scriptural references had gone for good, but it was not long before the new piecemeal approach began to arouse dissatisfaction too.

### **Unity and Diversity.**

H. H. Rowley sums up the change of theological climate that then took place as follows, "When the writer began his theological studies it would have seemed a hazardous thing to announce a course of lectures on the unity of the Bible. The emphasis then was predominantly on the diversity of the Bible . . . During the years of the writer's working life a very considerable change of climate has come over Biblical studies . . . The diversity of the Bible must be recognised fully and clearly even though we see a more profoundly significant unity running through it all . . The kind of unity which the writer sees in the Bible is a dynamic unity and not a static unity . . When the writer speaks of the dynamic unity of the Bible he is not thinking in terms of a merely human development that leaves God out of account nor yet falling back on traditional dogma that leaves reason out of account."<sup>1</sup>

### **Is a New Testament Theology Possible?**

The unity of the Bible is thus seen as a unity of divine revelation conveyed through a diversity of human expression. But this does not in itself produce a N.T. theology. So the basic question raised by this new approach to the Bible is, 'Is a N.T. theology possible at all?' In other words, when the New Testament has been understood as a collection of letters, tracts, records, gospels, all written by Christians for the Church in the late first and early second centuries of the Christian era, when these have been studied in their historical

1. The Unity of the Bible, pp. 15-25.

setting of the O.T., Judaism and Hellenism, then does the New Testament speak with one voice, is there a pattern of divine revelation that emerges, and can it be formulated into a consistent theology? It is unlikely that any scholar would maintain that the N.T. speaks with one voice. That Paul and the author of Hebrews, John and the Synoptists, Peter and the author of the Apocalypse all wrote in different styles has always been recognised, but, as Dr. Grant says,<sup>1</sup> the diversity goes much deeper than that. The literature itself is diversified in type, and equally diversified in ideas that range all the way from rigid Jewish messianism to exalted Hellenistic mysticism. "There is variety likewise in the forms of organization, in the ministry and in worship as reflected in the N.T."<sup>2</sup> There is also a wide divergence of ethical attitudes from strict Jewish legalism to the freedom of love; from blind hatred of Rome to co-operative citizenship. "There are . . . not merely one but more nearly a dozen distinguishable patterns in the N.T."<sup>3</sup> These patterns overlap and the dates are too scanty for a proper account to be given of any of them.

Most scholars therefore deny that the N.T. itself has a formulated theology. Dr. Grant speaks instead of 'incipient theologies' and 'areas of thought'. This of course does not close the door to the possibility of a N.T. theology. "Even if there is no N.T. theology, the thought of the N.T. is certainly moving in the direction of theology and its first efforts in that direction are profoundly interesting as well as of profound importance for the whole later development."<sup>4</sup>

### **The Kerygma.**

What then were these first efforts in the direction of theology and do they present a pattern of divine revelation? Since the appearance of Dodd's "Apostolic Preaching and its Developments" (1936) there has been general agreement that these first efforts can be summed up as the Gospel proclamation, the message or 'kerygma' of the early Church. From the early speeches of the Acts and various 'kerygmatic' summaries in Paul's letters this message may be summed up as:—(1) The age of fulfilment promised by God has

1. Intro. to N.T. Thought. p.30.
2. Op. cit. p.28.
3. Op. cit. p.21.
4. Op. cit. p.5.

dawned. (2) This has taken place through the life, death and resurrection of Jesus. (3) This Jesus has been exalted to the right hand of God as messianic head of the new Israel. (4) The Holy Spirit in the Church is the sign of Christ's present power and glory. (5) The messianic age will shortly reach its consummation in the return of Christ, which will be the judgment of the world. (6) Finally, the kerygma always closes with an appeal for repentance.

T. F. Glasson (The Second Advent, 1945) and J. A. Robinson (Jesus and His Coming, 1957) have questioned whether the return of Christ was an original part of the message and several scholars have pointed out that the kerygma was nearly always certified by an apostolic witness. Mark's Gospel is basically an expansion of this kerygma which has also profoundly affected the presentation of the other Synoptic Gospels and also John's Gospel. Paul and John and other N.T. writers developed this kerygma into a theology in different ways under the pressure of the need for the Church to readjust her thinking in view of the delay of the expected Parousia. Bo Reicke in the "Root and the Vine" reaches similar conclusions about the primitive preaching and in one form or another this conception of an early kerygma is also accepted by Bultmann, Stauffer, Cullmann, Grant and many other writers. Stauffer<sup>1</sup> speaks of the basic N.T. pattern as "the way of the Lord" which is understood as 'doxological' in that Christ can only fulfil His mission if His own glory means nothing to Him and God's glory all, 'antagonistic' in that the life of the Son of Man is a continual fight with the demonic prince of this world and 'soteriological' in that Christ's life is spent and fulfilled in service to the world. Dr. John Knox<sup>2</sup> prefers to speak of 'the event of Christ' rather than the 'kerygma'. This is a more embracing term since it includes all that happened in and through Jesus while the kerygma is simply the apostolic summary and proclamation of that event. Thus the New Testament presents us with what might be called "the raw materials for a theology".

### **Kerygma and Interpretation.**

Bultmann points out in the Epilogue to his "Theology of the N.T." that these raw materials even in their most primitive form are nevertheless theological. That is, they never are and never can be a plain

1. N.T. Theology. pp.25-9.

2. Christ the Lord p.3f. The Meaning of Christ p.21 p.30f.; The Death of Christ p.127f.

statement of facts but must always be facts seen through the eyes of faith as a divine revelation. "Both the kerygma and faith's self-understanding always appear in the texts . . . already interpreted in some particular way."<sup>1</sup> Not only so but "the kerygma is understandable as kerygma only when the self-understanding awakened by it is recognized to be a possibility of human self-understanding and thereby become the call to decision."<sup>2</sup> That this is fundamental for Bultmann's whole outlook is shown by the facts, first, that in his programme for the demythologising of the N.T. he starts with Christianity as an interpretation of Being understood as the life of faith and goes on to the event of redemption as being essentially commitment to Christ as a revelation of the love of God, and, second, that in his "Theology of the N.T." he fits the historical development into the same pattern. In this pattern it is really Paul who, for Bultmann, is the founder of Christian theology.<sup>3</sup> What came before are presuppositions and motifs; what comes after are attempts to understand Paul or reactions to his thought. John is regarded as portraying Jesus in the forms offered by the Gnostic redeemer myth.<sup>4</sup> So really the key to the whole development is the understanding of man prior to the revelation of faith and then man under faith living by grace in freedom. Such is Bultmann's reconstruction of N.T. theology. It is a valiant effort to do full justice to the diversity of the N.T., to find its unity in "salvation-occurrence,"<sup>5</sup> and from that situation-occurrence to formulate a theology that is relevant to man's condition today.

### The Source of the Unity.

The unity in diversity and the need for the formulation of a relevant theology are generally accepted and agreed upon. The crux of the matter is where the unity is to be found. Here is this collection of books of the N.T.! To begin with, why just these books and no others? That is the problem of canonicity; and the answer is that these books alone enshrine the original apostolic witness to the event of Christ. They are the authentic record. Perhaps there may be some doubt about some of them. II Peter and Jude

1. Theology of N.T. Vol. 2. p.239.
2. Op. cit. p.241.
3. Op. cit. Vol. 1. p.187.
4. Op. cit. Vol. 2. p.12.
5. Op. cit. Vol. 1. p.292f.

would perhaps have been omitted if their claim to apostolic authorship had not been accepted. Others whose apostolicity has also since been questioned are obviously sufficiently near to the event to justify inclusion. There are really no books outside the N.T. that have a stronger claim to inclusion than any that are included. Since then their inclusion is based on their witness to the 'event', that witness must also be the source of their unity. What then is the nature of the event to which they witness? It is the event of Christ. But to state it in general terms like this is obviously not enough. What is the event of Christ? It is the answer to that question that differentiates N.T. theologies. Bultmann says it is 'salvation-occurrence', Knox that it is 'church-spirit-resurrection'. Dodd, Manson, Bowman, Stauffer, Cullman, Jeremias and others say with different degrees of emphasis that it is Jesus as Lord and Christ. Filson says it is the resurrection. The rest of this essay will attempt to survey these points of view and to judge between them.

### **The Event of Christ.**

The Christ event is salvation-occurrence, says Bultmann. By this he means that it is the event of the Cross which drives man to a decision. Dr. John Knox independently reaches a similar position but with significant differences. In a series of books (*The Man Christ Jesus*, 1941, *Christ the Lord*, 1945, *The Meaning of Christ*, 1947, *the Death of Christ*, 1958) he has spoken of Jesus as the centre of the event of the coming of Christ which is that series of acts of God whereby God brings his salvation to man. Jesus who lived as a prophet and died on the Cross is remembered in the collective memory of the Church, known in the spiritual experience of the Church and interpreted in the thought of the Church as Christ and Lord. Jesus did not consciously think of himself as the Messiah or the Son of Man or even the Suffering Servant, although it is clear that within a decade the Church interpreted him thus. His divinity is not a nature additional to his humanity but is the activity of God in and through him which reaches its climax in the Cross. The Cross from being a stumbling block became the centre and symbol of the Church's faith. The whole story is enshrined in the 'myths' of a victory won against demonic powers and a sacrifice offered to God for human sin. There are<sup>1</sup> "two dramatic represen-

1. *Death of Christ*. p.153.

tations of existential man and his redemption." All this is very close to Bultmann. Where Knox differs is in his greater emphasis on the historical Jesus, on the Church and on the Resurrection.

Bultmann like many other 'Form-critics' is so influenced by the evidence of the activity of the Church in formulating and handing on the tradition that he is somewhat doubtful of the value of the Gospel evidence about Jesus and does not make much use of it. He seems to regard the Jesus of history as unknowable and unimportant. All we can know is the Christ of faith presented in the mythological dress of early Christian faith. This presentation must be demythologised and represented in a form which speaks to modern man's condition. This for Bultmann is in terms of an existentialist philosophy. Knox whilst agreeing that we can only see Jesus through the eyes of the early Church takes a much more positive approach to the quest for the historical Jesus. He also points out that the Christ-event did not happen to individuals in their existential aloneness but within a corporate life. The conception of the Church is thus the key concept of Knox's reconstruction of the development of N.T. faith. This is closely linked to the Resurrection because as Knox sees it, the creation of the Church, the coming of the Spirit and the Resurrection of Jesus are simply three different ways of referring to the same occurrence.

Whilst dissenting from Bultmann's scepticism on the one hand, Knox also dissents on the other hand from all those like Dodd, Manson, Bowman, Stauffer, Cullmann, Jeremias, Richardson and others, who find the essential nature of the Christ event either in 'the Messianic-consciousness' of Jesus or in his fulfilling the role of Messiah or Son of Man or Suffering Servant in one form or another. One of the most persuasive of these statements is E. Stauffer's "N.T. Theology", already referred to. Stauffer's position is really entirely dependent on Jesus' use of the term 'Son of Man'. "Of all the names and titles for Christ we have to give historical and theological primacy to the one which Jesus himself used to indicate his significance for the theology of history—that of the Son of Man."<sup>1</sup> Knox's arguments against this position are three-fold. The first is that since all we know of Jesus comes to us through the early Church the onus of proof is on those who ascribe these conceptions to Jesus himself. The second argument is that if we understand these con-

1. Op. cit. p.108.

ceptions as they were understood in Jesus' day it is psychologically extremely improbable that Jesus entertained them or that the Church did not. The third argument is that critical examination of the Gospel evidence reveals that none of the Messianic or Son of Man sayings shows that Jesus thought of himself as Messiah, Son of Man or Suffering Servant.

### **The Historical Jesus.**

Nevertheless it is clear that God was actively present in the man Christ Jesus and his message, and so we must go back to the historical Jesus. Jeremias writing in the Expository Times (August 1958) has recently surveyed the present position in regard to this problem. "The origin of Christianity", he says, "is not the kerygma, nor the Resurrection experience of the disciples, nor the Christ idea, but an historical event, to wit 'the appearance of the Man, Jesus of Nazareth'." The problem, however, is how to know and understand Jesus without modernizing or romanticizing him. Although Jeremias admits that we shall never be able to avoid this danger entirely he thinks there are five 'ramparts' as a defence against it. They are (1) source criticism, (2) form criticism, (3) information about the environment of Jesus, (4) study of Galilean Aramaic and (5) the eschatological character of his message.

### **The Environment of the New Testament.**

Points (3) and (5) demand further comment. Jeremias draws attention to the value of the study of Jewish apocalyptic, of Rabbinical literature and of the Dead Sea Scrolls in throwing light on the environment of Jesus.

These studies have demonstrated the essential Jewishness of the N.T., although it is a Hellenistic Judaism rather than a purely Palestinian Judaism. They have revealed some remarkable parallels but even more amazing differences. As Jeremias remarks, this study "has helped us to realise afresh the sharpness of Jesus' opposition to the religiosity of his time." Burrows concludes, "The probability of any direct contact between Jesus and the Qumran community has not been found very great . . . The supposed parallels between the careers of Jesus and the Teacher of Righteousness have turned out to be insignificant."<sup>1</sup>

1. More Light on the Dead Sea Scrolls. p.85.

## The Problem of Eschatology.

The eschatological question is really more important because it raises even more fundamental issues. This of course is an old story. Weiss and Schweitzer in the opening years of the century tried to explain Jesus in terms of 'consistent eschatology.' They were answered by various British theologians who practically denied that eschatology had any influence on Jesus at all. Both extreme positions were ultimately found to be untenable and a temporary resting place was found in Dodd's 'realised eschatology'. This was the idea that the 'end' had come in Jesus. In him and his message all the purposes of God were fulfilled. Recently the term 'inaugurated eschatology' has been suggested as a better description of the N.T. outlook. This suggests that the new age of fulfilment has dawned with the coming of Christ but that the end is not yet.

The problem of eschatology raises the whole question of time and history. Cullmann has attempted to deal with these issues in his book "Christ and Time" (1947). He starts from the Biblical conception of time as real and as extending indefinitely into the future so that eternity is not qualitatively different from time but is time continued on and on. This time is divided into two ages, the present age and the age to come. Along the time-line are various points of decision and significance determined by God as seasons of opportunity in His plan of redemption. For Jewish expectation the crisis-point, or the mid-point of time was to come at the parousia of the messiah which would be the end of the world and of course was always in the indeterminate future at any given moment of time. But for Christianity this crisis or mid-point has been pushed back from the end into the present. It has already been reached. It is in fact the time of the coming of Christ. But the end of the world has not yet come. Hence the paradox that we are living between the times.

This view has the merit of taking time as real and therefore taking history as real, but it does not pay enough attention to the problem of the eternal in time or to the problem of the end of time. The literalness and the exclusively chronological emphasis of Cullmann's view of time have also been criticised. What, after all, is the eschatological character of the Christ-event? It is not speculations about the temporal end of the world. It is the conviction of Jesus' followers that his life, death and resurrection were an event, they would even say, the event, of ultimate significance for the world. Here God was active, eternity was manifested in time, the Kingdom

of God was inaugurated, the new age had dawned, the end had come. There was in principle nothing more but the working out of this. Therefore by its very nature this act of God demanded that it should be made known universally and in being made known it demanded a response from everyone. This response concerned man's relation to God and therefore concerned his final destiny.

There are three problems that arise from this. The first concerns the eschatological expectations of Jesus himself. The second concerns the eschatological expectations of the Church. And the third concerns the fact that both the expectations of Jesus and of the Church are embodied in mythological patterns of thought.

Recently T. F. Glasson and J. A. T. Robinson, among others, have argued that there was a difference between the eschatological expectations of Jesus and those of the early Church. The argument is that Jesus declared an inaugurated eschatology but that the Church took over the eschatological schemes of Jewish apocalyptic and reinterpreted Jesus and his message in those terms in the belief that part of that expectation had been fulfilled and part was still to come. "The turning of the Church to wait for a second coming appears to arise directly from the hesitation whether *this* piece of history could fully be called the messianic or eschatological event . . . The hesitation was whether within history everything had now been inaugurated which that day would crown, or whether there were elements yet to enter it, another 'coming' *before* which the 'consummatum' could not be declared . . . features in the traditional picture of God's coming to reign, combined with those in Jesus' own teaching which did not yet appear to have been accounted for, materialized into a second mythological event still to be awaited."<sup>1</sup>

In other words, just as the parables were given a new slant by the early Church in terms of the Church's own situation, and just as the worship of Jesus as Lord and Christ was read back by the Church into the 'messianic consciousness' of Jesus, so too the eschatological expectations of Jesus were reinterpreted.

### **The Authority of Jesus.**

Those who take this view naturally lay a great deal of stress on recovering the message of Jesus Himself, and this brings us back to Jeremias' article and to those who say with him that the essence

1. J. A. T. Robinson Jesus and His Coming. p.151.

of Christianity is Jesus and his message. So Jeremias concludes, "If we tread the way thus described, between the five protecting walls which guard us from modernizing Jesus . . . the result is that we are confronted by a unique claim to authority". This claim to divine authority is the origin of Christianity and so, for Jeremias, investigation of the problem of the historical Jesus is the central task.

If, however, this claim to authority is taken as the central thing, two big problems emerge. The first is that it necessarily gives a rather subjective basis to Christianity. Did Jesus make this claim, what was the nature of it, was it a claim for himself or on behalf of God? How can a final answer to such questions ever be reached? Furthermore, in so far as Jesus' own ideas of himself and his position are in question, are these ideas really final anyway? Might not Jesus himself have been less or greater or at least different from what he himself thought? The second problem is that to rest everything on the historical Jesus like this does not and cannot take full account of the Cross and Resurrection.

### **The Resurrection.**

For these reasons perhaps the least inadequate interpretation of the event of Christ and the one which provides the best foundation for a theology of the N.T. is to take the Resurrection of Christ as the clue to the whole development. This point of view is argued persuasively by Dr. F. V. Filson in "Jesus Christ the Risen Lord" (1956). It also fits in with Dr. Knox's equation of Resurrection-Spirit-Church. Dr. Filson argues that the Resurrection is the dominant and controlling theme of the N.T. writers themselves. But it is important to note that Dr. Filson does not turn to the Resurrection as Kahler did in his book on "The So-called Jesus of History and the Historical Biblical Christ" (1892) because he thinks that the Jesus of History is unknowable and that Christianity literally started from the resurrection, but rather because it is the resurrection that unites the Jesus of history with the Christ of faith, or to use Dr. Knox's terminology, Christ the Lord was known because the man Christ Jesus was remembered.

But how is the Jesus of history related to the Christ of faith? The nearest that the N.T. comes to an explanation of this is in the Pauline Epistles.

(Note: This reference to the Pauline Epistles draws attention to what is still an important need in N.T. studies, that is, a comprehensive and up-to-date book on the theology of the Epistles. There

have been a number of valuable studies of Paul and some useful commentaries but there is certainly a crying need for a study of the theology of the Pauline Epistles that would make full use of recent work on the Rabbinic and the Apocalyptic backgrounds, the Dead Sea Scrolls, Gnosticism, Hellenism etc. and that would relate the theology of the Epistles to the primitive kerygma.)

### **Interpretation.**

So at the end of this survey we meet again the problem of interpretation. We have seen that there is a renewed interest in N.T. theology, and that although the diversity of the N.T. has to be acknowledged, the main emphasis today is on its unity. The unity is found in the kerygma which is behind Gospels, Acts and Epistles. The basic question for the understanding of the N.T. is therefore what is the clue to the kerygma? We have seen that the Resurrection, linking together the Jesus of history and the Christ of faith provides the best clue. But here as in almost every other N.T. problem we are faced by the fact that the material comes to us from a past age in a different language, out of a different culture and expressed in mythological thought patterns that are foreign to the twentieth century. Therefore to produce a theology that is a theology of the N.T. only is not enough. It is not enough to find out what Jesus, Paul, Peter and the early Church in general thought and to present it systematically or even harmonise it into a system. It must also be put forward in terms that, whilst preserving its essential truth and content, are relevant to life today. It was Bultmann's attempt to do this that led to the famous demythologising controversy.<sup>1</sup>

### **Demythologising.**

There is absolutely no doubt that the N.T. is written out of a world view that is no longer acceptable today. It could not be otherwise for it was written nearly 2,000 years ago and the Gospels and Acts began as folk literature handed on by oral tradition, while the letters were, in the main, incidental writings produced by the day-to-day situation in the churches. Of course the writers believed

1. 'Kerygma and Myth' ed. Bartsch, London 1953, Bultmann's essay on 'Hermeneutics' in 'Essays' New York 1955, Dinkler's essay on 'Principles of Biblical Interpretation', Journal of Religious Thought, vol. 13, p.2-30, 1955, and Henderson 'Myth in the N.T.' London 1952.

in a 3-storey universe, and knew nothing of scientific law or psychological explanations of unusual phenomena. We cannot expect modern men to accept this view of the world as true. But there is no need to accept it for there is nothing specifically Christian about it. It is only in the last century and a half that this has become a real problem. But now that it is a problem there is no reason why the unnecessary should not be stripped away and the essential restated in modern terms. In fact, such attempts were made a generation or more ago. Books like Fosdick's "Modern Use of the Bible" are still valuable for this. Where, however, these liberal attempts went wrong, says Bultmann, is that they simply tried to reject what was unacceptable and thus produced subjective modernized interpretations. The whole N.T. is mythical, so the problem is not just one of selection but of wholesale re-interpretation. Naturally a great deal turns on what is meant by myth, what is meant by interpretation, and what is the nature of the pre-suppositions brought to the attempt. Bultmann has been criticised on all these points—for his definition of myth, for his radical attempt to dispense even with religious symbolism in his reinterpretations and for his assumption that the Gospel is only understandable in terms of existentialism. Nevertheless Bultmann has raised the right question and has supplied some of the right answers. Some think he has retreated somewhat from his existentialist position in his essay on Hermeneutics, but this does not seem to be the case. In that essay he discusses the principles of interpretation as laid down by Aristotle and developed by Schleiermacher and Dilthey. He summarises these as (1) interpretation presupposes a previous living relation to the subject (2) the interest aroused by the subject determines the direction of the investigation, and (3) the object of the investigation can be supplied by a historical, psychological, aesthetic or cultural interest. The interpretation of Biblical writings follows these same principles. As over against Karl Barth who treats the Bible as '*Sui generis*,' Bultmann applies these principles to reach an existential understanding. In his own words, "The purpose of my existential interpretation of myth is precisely to enquire into the possibility of a valid meaning for the mythical picture of the world, and in this I am trying to proceed methodically, while in the case of Barth I can perceive only arbitrary assertions."<sup>1</sup>

Hermeneutics, or interpretation, thus attempts to correlate theology

1. Essays. p.261.

and history in the proclamation of the Christian message. It is no easy task but surely an essential one. As a formal discipline, hermeneutics has not found much place in British theological circles although in fact there has been a great deal of discussion of interpretation, and as far back as 1945 Cunliffe Jones ended his book with a plea for this very thing. "For it is only when by means of the constant interaction of the historical and theological study of the Bible, we gain a theological interpretation of the Bible which we can trust in its broad outlines as a means of putting us in the place where we can hear the living God, clothed in His Gospel, speaking to us, that we can truly understand and obey the authority of the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments in their testimony to Divine Revelation in Jesus Christ our Lord."<sup>1</sup> The trend of N.T. studies is in this direction. Let us hope that it will soon bear fruit in new insights and understanding.

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1. Op. cit. p.118-9.

"Love is loyalty; it is the willingness to let the self be destroyed rather than that the other cease to be; it is the commitment of the self by self-binding will to make the other great. It is loyalty, too, to the other's cause—to his loyalty. As there is no patriotism where only the country is loved and not the country's cause—that for the sake of which the nation exists—so there is no love of God when God's cause is not loved, that which God loves and to which he has bound himself in sovereign freedom." H. Richard Niebuhr. *The Purpose of the Church and its Ministry.*

# Meditation On The Deck Of A Burman Riverboat

I stand in a great tradition—  
In the tradition of those who have stood on the deck  
And heard the sound of the waves,  
And have seen the moon filter its rays through the warm  
evening mist  
And headed for a distant city to preach the Word of God.  
This is the tradition of those who dare to think they have seen  
the heavenly vision, however dimly and intermittently.  
And who are content with nothing less than a determined  
effort to obey it, however feebly and falteringly.  
And when the cynic,  
Whether without or within, taunts:  
"What is this vision glorious?"  
Words fail.  
But for such as they are, the vision means  
A growing conviction that God  
Must really be like Jesus Christ,  
That the knowledge and realization of this is the most potent  
seed-for-good which can be sown,  
Therefore, worth any expenditure I am able to make.  
And that in the spending of self in this task  
Even my modest gestures can be  
Energized by the might of the Eternal Spirit.  
This is the tradition to which I belong.  
Not to a sect of the perfect,  
The always loyal, the never doubting,  
But to the fellowship of the restless and the questing,  
To those who think this Gospel is true,  
To those who risk all to test that thesis with a life.

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# The Bible In Life And Action

DAVID S. C. CHEN.

The impact of the Bible upon the human race has been tremendous. It is the greatest and the most influential book in the world. Where it is read, heard, and studied, there a striking change takes place in the life of man. Through the ministry of the Bible more and more people have come to the real knowledge of God, man, and the world. It is an old book, but the truths it conveys never grow old. It is a collection of books that were written predominantly by Hebrews, but it is ever applicable to people of all races and nations. No wonder over twenty million Bibles, Testaments, and Portions are published and circulated every year throughout the world.

The Bible as such is relevant to all people in all ages. The relevance of the Bible, however, is conditioned by the way it is understood and used. It can be clearly seen that a life which is guided by the Bible is one kind, and a life which is not guided by the Bible is quite another. But the question is, how is the Bible understood and used in the kind of life in which it is regarded as relevant? When the question of how people understand and use the Bible is answered, then we will be in a position to say precisely how the Bible influences in an adequate way a person in his life and action.

The most vital and enduring aspect of the Bible is that it is the word of God. If the Bible is not the word of God it would cease to be the Bible. Since the Bible is the word of God, it can serve to capture the whole of man and make him anew in Christ. But unfortunately there have been and there are still many views about what it means to say "the Bible is the Word of God." This is a very serious question that needs to be answered.

According to Alan Richardson, from the second century down to the eighteenth, the Bible was generally regarded as verbally inspired, but from the beginning of the eighteenth century, a different approach was taken.<sup>1</sup> Since then a thorough-going scientific

investigation of the historical formation of the Bible has been taking place.

The critical approach to the Bible is inevitably opposed by some who regard biblical criticism as "a catastrophe for the whole fabric of the doctrine of the church."<sup>2</sup> Since such believe that the Bible is the literal and infallible word of God, they say that one must take everything in the Bible as the word of God or take none at all. Concerning the battle between biblical criticism and those who oppose it, Richardson says, "The battle for freedom of enquiry and for theological liberty has been fought and won."<sup>3</sup> In regard to the outcome of this battle he is confident that "there can be no going back on the position gained by the discoveries of biblical research . . . Whatever losses were sustained in the battle for the freedom of criticism, the gains far outweigh the losses."<sup>4</sup> Biblical criticism has certainly made a great contribution to the understanding of the Bible, and now there is no way of getting back to the traditional view of verbal inspiration. Gabriel Hebert, who is sympathetic both to evangelical fundamentalism and to honest Christian criticism says, "the dictation theory is to the best of my belief repudiated by all the conservative evangelical leaders, because it leaves no room for the individuality of the human writers."<sup>5</sup> It must be understood that in preaching the gospel of God's salvation from the Bible and in seeking to find the will of God in the Bible, it is not necessary to believe that the Bible is the word of God in the "literalist" sense.

The critical approach to the Bible found it necessary to differentiate between the word of God and the words of men. It can no longer regard the Bible as the word of God in the literal sense. In the words of Richardson, "When we speak of the inspiration of the Scriptures we ought primarily to mean the inspiration of the men who wrote them; it is men who are inspired, not books or words, except in a figurative sense."<sup>6</sup> Modern biblical scholarship will not allow people to worship the Bible, because it knows precisely how it came into being and what it is for—it was written by sinful and fallible men and it is used by God to convey His living word to men. According to Edwin Lewis, "'faith in the Bible' is, in truth, a most unhappy phrase."<sup>7</sup> Christian faith is not faith in an infallible book, it is faith in the living God who by means of the fallible words of men conveys His infallible truth to the minds and hearts of men. The most remarkable result of modern biblical scholarship is "the emancipation of the Word of God from identification with the words of men."<sup>8</sup>

Now in what sense is the Bible the word of God? The Christocentric answer of Brunner is: "The Scriptures are the Word of God, because, and in so far as, they give us Christ."<sup>9</sup> Barth answers it in this way: "The Bible is God's Word so far as God lets it be His Word, so far as God speaks through it . . . The statement 'The Bible is God's Word,' is a confession of faith, a statement made by faith that hears God Himself speak in the human word of the Bible."<sup>10</sup> The Bible as the record of God's revelation to man which culminates in the coming of Jesus Christ is used by God as a physical means to waken man to the realization of God and His will for him. When this "event" of God in making himself known to man through the Bible takes place, man hears the living word of God. Certainly through the Bible the God who became incarnate in Jesus Christ is known to man. It is in this vital sense that the Bible ought to be understood as the word of God.

Thus understood, the Bible will not be superstitiously abused or absurdly interpreted and then applied to Christian life and work. What each writer has to say in the Bible is to be heard and understood without even modernizing his words.<sup>11</sup> And the historical background against which the author speaks ought to be studied in order to know what he really says and what it means today.<sup>12</sup> But at the same time since the Bible is in the words of men, one needs to be critical in order to identify what the word of God for man is.<sup>13</sup>

The Bible as that which makes God and His will known to man is always relevant to life, because a meaningful and purposeful life always demands that God the Creator and His creative will be known. But a wrong understanding of the significance of the Bible is bound to produce a wrong understanding of the relevance of the Bible. Sometime ago I came across an article in a Christian magazine that was published for the College students in Taipei city. To my surprise it was entitled "The biblical truth which is truer than scientific truth." The writer's approach to the Bible certainly was a wrong one in that he made the Bible speak against science, while in reality the Bible and science do not contradict each other. The Bible does not compete with science in its message, and science does not pretend to say what only the Bible can say.

Again the relevance of the Bible is not the kind of relevance in which it is considered to be "a sort of inspired encyclopaedia, where chapter and verse can be turned up and questions settled out of hand."<sup>14</sup> A couple of Sundays ago, having interpreted for a visiting Japanese minister in one of the churches in Taipei, I heard the elder

making this announcement: "There are cards on the back of which are printed Bible verses for various problems. If each of you take one, you will be able to solve your own problems while the minister is away." It made me wonder if this is what many mean by the relevance of the Bible. It is very easy for the simple-minded people in this part of the world to use the Bible in that way. I suspect that such is the way the Bible is used by many Christians in this Island.

The relevance of the Bible ought to be understood in terms of its total message which enables man to meet his God, and to live for His glory spontaneously and intelligently.

It is through the Bible that man receives an adequate knowledge of God. The Bible presents God as the Creator who is sovereign but does not destroy human freedom. He is holy, loving, and righteous. He is both immanent and transcendent. He saves but He also judges. He is the source of life and power. He is eternal, and ever abides with His children all through the ages. Above all He is the God who became incarnate in Jesus Christ in order to save man from his sin. Only with such understanding of God, will man be able to live a good and wholesome life in this world. Taiwan is full of spiritism, idolatry, polytheism, 'ancestorism', animism and fatalism. The religion of Taiwan is predominantly the syncretism of Buddhism, Confucianism, and Taoism which offers no definite and clear-cut doctrine of God except a vague and distorted one. Therefore the Bible needs to be introduced to the people in Taiwan more and more so that they may acquire a right and clear understanding of God through the ministry of the Bible.

It is through the Bible that man receives an adequate knowledge of himself. This comes from an adequate knowledge of God, so that man is enabled to know himself in the light of his knowledge of God.<sup>15</sup> The Bible teaches that man is made in the image of God so that he feels restless and dis-satisfied unless he lives his life in close relationship with God the Creator. It teaches that man is both spirit and body, the latter being as important as the former. It teaches that all men are capable of becoming the children of God and are treated equally by their Maker, which implies that racial discrimination and colonialism are the inventions of the devil and must be rejected by the church. It also teaches that man is a sinner who in his God-given freedom lives in autocratic rebellion against God. He is capable of doing good and efficient works, but in essence he is a sinner who needs the salvation of God wrought in Jesus Christ. Through my own observations, I realize that there

are many well-to-do folks in Taiwan who feel restless and dissatisfied in spite of their wealth. There are many of those who despise their bodies and practice asceticism not knowing that man's spirit and body are inseparably held precious by God the Creator. This is to be found not only in non-Christian circles, but also in the Christian church. Racial discrimination and colonialism are also experienced in the church from time to time. And those who in the effort to save themselves, work desperately hard and who finally become discouraged and dis-illusioned are countless. In such circumstances of life the Bible has much to say.

It is through the Bible that man receives an adequate knowledge of the meaning and purpose of work. The Bible teaches that God worked in order to produce the universe and life therein and that He works continually. It teaches that man is placed by God to work in and look after the world, therefore man's work is as important as his life itself. The Bible makes it clear that man by destiny must work in order to live. But unfortunately this is not properly understood by man. Robert Calhoun says, "For very many people, daily life is a dull and futile business. Work is too often pointless drudgery, a source of anxiety and frustration rather than personal fulfilment."<sup>16</sup> This could well represent the psychology of most people in Taiwan. On account of the lack of the sense of working with God, people tend to be selfish, irresponsible, and unhappy in their work. Such people can be helped by the Bible to re-orientate themselves in their daily work, with the sense of working with and for God, after their momentous encounter with Him.<sup>17</sup>

It is through the Bible that men receive an adequate knowledge of the importance and necessity of loving one another and of forgiving one another. In Mat. 5: 43-48 Jesus teaches that one must love all men, even his enemy. Paul says, "God shows his love for us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us . . . While we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son."<sup>18</sup> If God so loves his enemies in seeking to save them from eternal condemnation, we also must love our enemies. Such theo-centric consideration of human beings is the very heart of Christian ethics. The Christian believer loves others, including his enemies, not because of his greatness but for the sake of and in response to the love of God.<sup>19</sup>

Forgiveness is very much stressed in the Bible. In his life and work Jesus forgave people's sins, and He also taught about it.<sup>20</sup> The

Bible teaches that since God forgives our sins, we must likewise forgive each other. Christ paid a big price on the cross in order to forgive sinners. Likewise one must be willing to pay the price in order to be able to forgive others. Unwillingness to pay the price means inability to forgive. Both love and forgiveness are very much needed in church life as well as in social life. The Chinese people are in great need of learning from the Bible how to love and how to forgive.

It is through the Bible that man receives an adequate knowledge of the material world. The Bible teaches that the world is God's good creation and that man is held responsible for the way he uses the material things in the world. William Temple has said, "Christianity is the most materialistic religion in the world."<sup>21</sup> This is true in the sense that Christianity, in the light of the Bible, has to make the best and the most meaningful use of 'matter.' To consider matter as evil is foreign to the Bible. The biblical concept of matter as God's good creation and as that which God has entrusted to man naturally gives birth to the Christian idea of "stewardship." To handle all the material things as a good and faithful steward is an important aspect of a good life in this world. It is necessary that people here in Taiwan and elsewhere should learn from the Bible what stewardship really means. My personal conviction is that until the peoples of the world have learned from the Bible the true meaning of stewardship, selfish accumulation of wealth, wasteful use of money, arbitrary use of power, and perverted use of the human body and talents, will never be prevented.

The Bible is the word of God, because God speaks through it. The Bible is relevant to life because man in every generation is in need of what it alone can give.

#### NOTES.

1. Preface to Bible Study, pp. 23ff.
2. Brunner, *Revelation and Reason*, p. 274.
3. op. cit., p. 26.
4. op. cit., p. 28.
5. Fundamentalism and the Church of God, p. 56.
6. op. cit., pp. 32f.
7. The Biblical Faith and Christian Freedom, p. 28.
8. ibid., p. 44.
9. op. cit., p. 280.

10. Church Dogmatics, Vol. I, Part I, p. 123.
11. Concerning each biblical writer C. H. Dodd says, "We require no crude attempt to 'modernize' his words. We listen to him with the humility which will not interrupt him in order to square what he says with what we think he ought to have said." (The Bible To-day, p. 30).
12. In order to avoid "autosuggestion for the Word of God," Dodd says, "there ought to be no separation between the 'historical' and the 'devotional' study of the Bible" (ibid., p. 146).
13. G. Hebert recommends the following attitude towards the Bible: "In regard to this Word of God spoken through words of men, we are required to be at once humble and docile, and alert and critical." (ibid., p. 11).
14. C. H. Dodd, op. cit., p. 13.
15. Calvin says, "No man can arrive at the true knowledge of himself without having first contemplated the divine character, and then descend to the consideration of his own." (Inst., 1:1:2).
16. God and the Day's Work, p. 7.
17. Worship and vocation are inseparable. Calhoun says, "Divine vocation is a call also to worship. Man, whom we know best as a worker, we know also as capable of rising above his labor and above himself into a conscious meeting with God." (ibid., pp. 113f.).
18. Rom. 5:8-10.
19. Cf. 1 Jn. 4:7-21, Calvin says, "The whole human race, without any exception should be comprehended in the same affection . . . there is no difference between the barbarians and the Grecian, the worthy and the unworthy, the friend and the foe; for they are to be considered in God, and not in themselves." (Inst. 2:8:55) Again he says, "the love of the brother grows from nothing but fear and love of God . . . It is certainly wrong to separate the love of God from the love of man."
20. Mat. 18:21.  
(Comm. Gal. 5:13-14, trans. by J. Haroutunian).
21. Nature, Man and God, p. 478.

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"There is more of the whole Biblical content in the thought of most Fundamentalists than Liberals believe. Not only Genesis 1, and Matthew 1, but Isaiah 40 and I. Corinthians 13 are inscribed in their minds and hearts. Conversely there is far more Biblical knowledge and conviction in the liberal mind than ultra-conservatism imagines." H. Richard Niebuhr. *The Purpose of the Church and its Ministry*.

REKTOR TOBING INTRODUCES

# Universitas HKBP “Nommensen”

PEMATANG SIANTAR, SUMATRA.

(H.K.B.P. = Batak Church)

The establishment of the Nommensen University in Pematang Siantar may be regarded as a witness for the Gospel of Christ in the midst of the population of Indonesia with a total of 80,000,000 people of whom 90% are Muslims. Even of the 10% left only about a third of them are Christians, i.e. 3% of the total. The policy of the early Rhenish Missionaries was always to create Christian schools alongside of the congregations. In 1868 the first Teacher-Preacher School or Seminary, as it was called, was opened at Prau Sorat only six years after the first congregation came into being.

In 1877 this seminary was transferred to Pansurnapitu. The students entering the seminary had usually completed the elementary school course of five years. In 1883 the first regular theological school (Sikola Pandita) for training pastors, was created alongside the seminary. Since the space was very limited, this Sikola Pandita was transferred to Siponholon in 1901. The students for this institution were selected from those preacher-teachers who passed out of the preacher-teacher school and had an experience of about five to seven years serving the Church.

When the church grew in size, and higher education was available to more, it was felt necessary to raise the standard of theological education, and accordingly in 1950 a course for students who had completed their junior middle School-education (6 years elementary school—3 years Middle School) was started. This school was named Sikola Theologia Menengah, i.e. Middle Theological School, offering a five year course. Some years ago a guest from abroad visiting the Batak Church remarked how eager and longing the Batak people were for progress in education and knowledge. After Indonesia achieved her independence from colonial rule, signs were everywhere evident that earnest efforts were being made to improve

the social and educational status of this nation. The Batak Church was no exception to this general concern for progress. And it is no surprise that the Church made serious efforts to create a University and finally succeeded on Oct. 7, 1954 in opening the Nommensen University in Pematang Siantar. The Sikola Pandita and Sikola Theologia Menengah which were in Sipoholon were transferred to the Nommensen complex and along with them three faculties were opened, namely Theology, Law and Economics. The site chosen for the complex was formerly a big Estate hospital on the near outskirts of the town. It was an opportune moment when the H.K.B.P. decided to open this University since the Roman Catholic Church would certainly have stepped in and opened one, if the Batak Church had not.

The difficulties which this university had to face at the outset were many, particularly with regard to personnel for the faculty. Since the professors locally available at Siantar were not sufficient, part-time professors had to be enlisted from the coastal town of Medan 80 miles away. Because of insurmountable difficulties the Law faculty had to be closed. The Board of trustees after considerable deliberation decided finally to transfer the Economics faculty to Medan, since practically all the part-time professors were resident in or around Medan.

A technical faculty was opened in Medan in 1957. But unfortunately towards the end of that year many of the professors had to leave the country for political reasons and therefore the faculty had to be closed.

If in the course of time additional teachers are available the intention is to re-open this faculty. Hence at the time of writing only two of the faculties continue, namely the faculty of Theology at Siantar and the faculty of Economics at Medan.

### **Faculty of Theology.**

The largeness and the beauty of the Nommensen complex in Siantar is a joy to all of us. Even though the estate is big enough for our needs just now, it is noteworthy that the local municipal council has offered additional ground when we need it in the adjoining rubber estate. This can be well understood, since the Nommensen complex is regarded by everyone here as the crown of Siantar. A new hall has already been built up, and several of the old barracks have been completely rebuilt in order to accommodate the class rooms, library, offices, audio-visual department etc. There are already seven houses built for the professors, and plans are ahead

for building some more. The character of the faculty may be stated as ecumenical and international, since besides the Indonesian professors there are others from America, Germany, India and Scandinavia. In addition to 31 faculty students there are 79 students of the middle theological school studying on the campus. The Nommensen Theological Seminary, in fact, functions as a training ground not only for the Batak Church but also for the Nias Church, the Simalungun Church and the Mentawi Church. Nommensen has also invited students from the Karo and other churches as well.

### **Graduate Teacher Training Course.**

It is to be regretted that along with the other faculties, no plans were made to start a graduate Teacher Training Course. From statistics it is well established that in the whole of Indonesia Bataks are in the majority among teachers. How excellent it would be if the Batak Church could train teachers in their University and send them not only to their own schools but also to Government and other schools. Because of this deep need every effort should be made to establish a graduate Teacher Training Course in Nommensen.

According to the present rules of the Government a University has to have a minimum of three faculties in order to be recognised as a University. Considering this need and the advantages from the point of view of costs, the third faculty should be that of Education for training graduate teachers. If such an institute is opened in Siantar there will be ample scope for co-ordination between the faculty of theology and that of education. Professors can exchange help in the two courses. It is earnestly hoped that friends in Indonesia and abroad who love Nommensen will help to build up this most necessary faculty of Education.

### **Faculty of Economics, Medan.**

It is also a joy to see the rapid progress of this faculty. There are six full-time and twelve part-time professors. The total number of students is 320. When the representative of the Ford Foundation was on a visit he acknowledged the high quality of the course and he promised to recommend strongly that the Ford Foundation provide personnel, funds and materials for the running of the faculty. Accordingly the Foundation has most generously given large subsidies, provided teachers, scholarships, books and other materials. It has been so much that it is not possible to list them all. At the end of last year because of the critical political situation there was fear that this faculty would have to be closed, since all the Dutch part-time professors were under orders to leave the country. Efforts

were made to request the government and the military authorities to permit four of the Dutch part-time professors to become full-time workers of Nommensen. Permission has been granted provisionally till 1961. Our gratitude goes toward the Ford Foundation which in addition to providing two American professors provides also for these four full-time Dutch professors. Six Indonesian students are studying in the U.S.A. under Ford Foundation scholarships.

When in due course they return here, they will replace the present foreign members of the faculty. Throughout the academic year 1957-58, the faculty ran its courses in a rented building named "Prayatna". But from September 1958, Nommensen has had its own building. The present building was originally a house but has been rebuilt and additional structures put up to accommodate the class rooms, officers etc.

It is planned to buy also the grounds adjoining the present building to provide bigger buildings and hostels for the faculty.

A committee including the Municipal Chairman of Medan has been already constituted to be responsible for raising funds both at home and abroad for the purpose of buying additional land and carrying out the building projects. The rough estimated amount for the land and building is Rp. 5,000,000.

### **The Spiritual care of the Faculty Students in Medan.**

In addition to the Christian students of the Faculty of Economics, numbering over 200, there are over 1,000 Christian students studying in other universities in Medan. It is self-evident that the Church is responsible for the spiritual welfare of these nearly 1,500 Christian students. Up-to-date it has not been possible to find and appoint someone to be entirely in charge of this important phase of work, though one of the Nommensen professors from Siantar has for some time been conducting a chapel service for the Economics students once a week. We hope however to recruit a suitable person for this work, and find also a house for him, large enough to function as a hostel for least some of the students who are hard put to find accommodation in Medan.

Nommensen University is still very young but faces great opportunities and responsibilities. From what has been stated above, it can be clearly seen that much remains to be done. It is also very clear that the H.K.B.P. with its own resources cannot carry out all these plans. It is earnestly hoped that all those who love Nommensen will by their earnest prayers and help, small or large, make it more possible to achieve the dreams and plans of this Institution so that it may be an instrument for proclaiming the Gospel in Indonesia.

# “Javanism” And Its Scriptures

DR. A. G. HÖNIG.

[Biblical Theology and the Christian attitude to the Bible raise the question of the attitude of the religions of South East Asia to their scriptures. Dr. Höning was invited to deal with this question in relation to “Javanism.” Ed.]

In my opinion the main difficulty in carrying out my task satisfactorily is the fact that a basic knowledge of “Javanism” will not be common to the readers of this journal. Nevertheless, it should not be impossible, and may be of some use to readers outside Indonesia, because “Javanism” is not an isolated religious current, but a specimen of a phenomenon which can be observed in many areas of this part of the world.

Kraemer has pointed out, that Javanism is an example of the religious phenomenon of syncretism<sup>1</sup> and has given us a picture of the vastness of the problem.

For that reason, there is a common background of Javanism and other religious currents in the countries of South East Asia. So there is also a common necessity to understand it. As far as I can see, the attitude of Javanism to its scriptures is also a problem of common interest, for this attitude does not differ basically from the attitude of several other religions of the mystic type, with a cosmic, naturalistic-monistic apprehension of life and the world.

The best way, perhaps, to give an idea of Javanism is to discuss in brief one of the best known books of Javanism, the “Serat Dewarutji.”<sup>2</sup>

Javanese mysticism has a rich literature, and several scholarly editions of the most important scriptures have been made available through the university of Leyden, Holland. Many of them come from an Islamic background. But the serat Dewarutji is from the Javanese world outside Islam, and is Hinduistic. In many parts, however, items of Islamic mysticism may form the background.

The serat Dewarutji is partly the story of the hero Werkodara in his search for “the living Water”, and partly it is a treatise of Javanese theology or philosophy about the mystic way of salvation.

Both Schuurman and Wind<sup>3</sup> agree on the point, that it is possible to discern in the story the phases of progress in reaching the mystic end. These phases are not only the phases of progress in Werkodara's life, but the description of man on his way to unification<sup>4</sup> or unity<sup>4</sup> with God.

Wind summarises the story with the following description: "Bima<sup>5</sup> of Werkodara is ordered to search for the water of life by his tutor Drona, who is hostile towards him. He has to dig up mount Tjandramuka. There the evil giants Rukmuka and Rukmakala dwell, and Drona hopes that Bima will perish at their hands. But instead, he kills the giants, who appear to be the gods Indra and Baju. He is then sent back to Drona, in order that he may now learn from him the actual place of the water of life. He is told to go to the Southern Ocean, in the heart of which he will find the water of life". He experiences many difficulties but in the end, he meets the god Dewarutji. "The god tells him to enter his stomach, and there Bima receives the highest instruction in mysticism, and finally enjoys the bliss of his unification with 'The Divine Essence'. But there is still a task left for him in life . . ." "The purpose of this work lies in the description of the road the mystic has got to take . . .".<sup>6</sup>

From this brief summary we can grasp several points related to our problem.

First of all, we can understand the kind of mysticism the *serat Dewarutji* teaches.

Schuurman states<sup>7</sup>, that the two kinds of mysticism mentioned by Buber<sup>8</sup>, "emotional" and "speculative" mystic apprehension, can also be found in Javanese mysticism. The emotional kind of mysticism speaks of unification. The servant strives for unification with the Lord. Speculative mysticism supposes that the highest knowledge is insight into the unity of man and God. Both Schuurman and Wind point out that these two forms of mysticism are intermingled in the *serat Dewarutji*.

That point can be made clear from the brief summary which has been given above. An analysis of its contents shows that Werkodara reaches his goal by his own striving and labour, and also by the instruction of the teacher. These two elements in the way to reach the mystic goal correspond with the striving for unification of the emotional type of mysticism, and the striving for the highest knowledge in a speculative way, in which the highest point is reached when the mystic becomes conscious of his own unity with the divine

essence of the world.

From the mystic's two ways of striving described in the *serat Dewarutji* we can draw, I think, important conclusions about the attitude of this kind of mysticism to its scriptures.

The mysticism of unification is described in terms of Werdodara's unbelievably arduous expedition in search of the living water. He has to fight himself, his senses and his desires. He has to abandon everything he likes and loves in this world. He has to accept ascetism to the extent that finally he is already in the realm of death. Man has to fight his struggle alone, he has to fight against many and powerful foes, he has to overcome all obstacles, especially the obstacles in his own being, for his inner-self has to be freed, and 'realised'. Complete self-abandonment means entrance to unity with the divine essence, which dwells in everything.

Here we are in the world of the "cosmic, naturalistic-monistic apprehension of life and world" and in the sphere of "naturalistic religions of trans-empirical realisation" (Kraemer.)

In this religious sphere there is no room really for revelation in the true sense of the word. What could be the concept of revelation in this naturalistic and unpersonalistic apprehension of religion? At best, revelation can mean self-understanding, becoming conscious of the truth about the real state of things in the world. Reaching this is a struggle, which has to be fought in real life. The mystic way has to be experienced, and lived.

From this point of view we can understand what has been pointed out by Schuurman, that in Javanism, on the one hand, you can find an avowed disdain for books and book-knowledge in many forms, while on the other hand, there are many quotations from the mystics of Islam. Schuurman also speaks about the special kind of "aristocratic life-attitude," which is connected with it<sup>9</sup>.

There is also that other trend of thought, the speculative one about unity, and the important place of the teacher and teaching in the whole story of Werdodara. Is there here any notion of revelation, in the way Werdodara has to go? Is it possible to conclude that here there is a higher estimation of scriptures?

Twice we meet with the importance of a teacher for Werdodara in his search for the water of life.

It is necessary for him to know the right way. So he goes to the "resi", the seer, Danjang Drona. He gets instruction about where the water of life can be found. But by following this instruction

he does not reach his goal. He has been deceived by his teacher. A voice from above says to him, "You are searching for the water according to the instruction of Danjang Drona; water of pure life really exists, but it is not here."

Here we meet with the common idea of Javanese mysticism, that he who is obedient to the law, is on the wrong track. The law is necessary, but only as an indication of where to find the right way. In itself it is not the right way. To believe that it is, is to make a big mistake. It is only useful in a preparatory sense. Werkodara has been in this preparatory phase and he fails. Why? Because he has misunderstood the law. The Danjang Drona could not have told the truth. Werkodara has to find it for himself. It can not be put in words; it has to be experienced. In the Islamic form of Javanese mysticism this is the phase of the "schar'i'at". It becomes clear that there is a notable disdain for the law. This is found not only among Javanese mystics; it is a common attitude in Javanese society.

Nevertheless Werkodara goes back to Drona and he gets new instructions. This new way is terribly dangerous, but not misleading. Is this real revelation about the goal he wishes to reach? We should notice, that Werkodara only gets an indication as to where he has to go—to the ocean'. But the attainment of his goal is the result only of his own fearless struggle, and his faithful conviction that nothing can stop him from reaching his goal. So basically the difference between his first expedition and his second is not that he now has been given better revelation about the truth, but that Werkodara has a better attitude towards the indications of Danjang Drona. His struggle is so severe, that finally he is near the borderline of life and death. His coming through and entering new life is the grace of God. Probably it is better to say: 'he gets life out of death, and that is the only way to get it'. After that he does not need Drona any more.

It should be clear, that the function of the teacher, however important it may be, is not the function of a prophet, who reveals anything. He only gives an indication: 'Go that way and fight your way through all obstacles. You will then reach what you are searching for'.

In the subsequent phases Werkodara meets a new teacher. He is the god Dewarutji, in the form of a little dwarf. After many teachings, finally he has to enter the body of the dwarf, through his left ear<sup>10</sup>; and in this way, through several phases of new instruction,

he reached the highest and most delightful state of unity.

We might be inclined to say that here we find clear indications that there is real revelation from God about Himself, and about the way to reach him.

But further research warns us not to draw overhasty conclusions, and not to be misguided by our own way of thinking in interpreting this part of the book with our own religious concepts.

First of all, we should notice the fact that, finally, Dewarutji declares frankly the unsatisfying character of all that can be said in words. In his book quoted above<sup>11</sup> Wind draws our attention to the fact that there is also mentioned the way of knowing "without indications" and that this way is a "higher way", the ideal, true way of knowing.

Moreover it is necessary to ask the question: "Who is the god who is met by Werkodara?" In several studies about Javanism it is noticed, that there is always a notable hesitation to answer the question. "Is God a person or not?"<sup>12</sup> The same hesitation arises again with the question: "Is there an absolute unity between God and man, or is it necessary to acknowledge their two-ness in one sense or another?"<sup>13</sup>

In answering the first question, it is said that God is a teacher, the Almighty, reigning over the world, who destines everything; Maker of the world; the Lord, and so on. But from another, the higher, the really true point of view, He has to be called Divine Essence, which is the true essence of every thing. Werkodara has to reach the phase in which he understands that he is God and is allowed to take the place of the God. God is the mystery of life, the mystery of man's life, the mystery of Werkodara's life. "God is the mystery of my being", that is the final confession of faith. It is more. It is the paramount statement of absolute truth.

Concerning the second question, one could point out that in the serat Dewarutji God and man are clearly distinguished. Werkodara meets the Lord, and he has been searching for Him for a very long time. He has to go a long way to reach Him, but the end of the way is not only described as 'unification,' but also as 'becoming conscious of the basic unity.' Is it a wrong conclusion to state that after all 'unification' means 'to become conscious of this unity'? That is why it can be said too, that Werkodara's long way is the way of self-realisation.

By this trend of thought, we come to the question "In what sense can the word revelation be used in this sphere of apprehension of the

relation between God and world, God and man? Who can speak to whom in this final unity? What else can a book be but an instruction about a technique of reaching the goal? Unification and unity have to be lived, and experienced. Every thing I need, is already in me. It should be detached, in order to be realised. Nothing need to be said to me, nothing need to be done for and with me. Self-abandonment, the transition from the material world, losing oneself, and loosing oneself, is reaching the true knowledge, and is experience of the unity with the Divine Essence. This is "dying in order to live".

In this world of ontological concepts about the "true being" there is no personal meeting with a personal God. Everything said about the teacher, and about receiving knowledge is only instruction about useful means for reaching the goal. But it does not lead Werkodara to any personal relationship with "the other One".

In this system aristocratic disdain for a book is a matter of course, and the logical attitude to any scripture.

I remember many a conversation in Java with men coming from this way of understanding the relation between God and man, and of mystic-philosophic thinking. We could speak for hours about what we need to get, inner peace and happiness. But in that connection the Bible, as God's message to us about these subjects, was always called completely unsatisfying. The Bible was said not to give "a way". The Bible was said to ask "only" for belief in God. That could be nothing more than the first phase. Man needs to go beyond this "crude" way of thinking about the relation between God and man. A message about "the wonderful works of God" coming to us in His revelation?" "No sir, that could not be the last and definite thing to lead me to the real goal." The end of every conversation was a smile meaning to indicate this in a courteous way.<sup>14</sup>

#### NOTES.

1. H. Kraemer, *The Christian Message in a Non-christian World*, p. 200. *Religion and the Christian Faith*, p. 408.
2. An excellent thesis on the book is written by A. Wind, *Leven en dood in het Evangelie van Johannes en in de serat Dewarutji*, with a summary in English, Franeker (Holland), 1956.  
The reason that the serat Dewarutji has been chosen here is the fact that this treatise comes from the Islamic background. Moreover the serat Dewarutji has been such a popular book until now, that it is discussed in remote mountain villages as well as in the upper intellectual circles of society. It is sold in the best bookstores as well as in the halls of little post offices in "underdeveloped areas".

3. B. M. Schuurman, *Mystik und Glaube im Zusammenhang mit der Mission auf Java*, Haag, 1933, p. 18 etc.  
Wind o.c., p. 260 etc.
4. For the difference of these two words in the context of Javanese mysticism see below in this article.
5. Because of this name the book is often called "Serat Bima Sutji", which means "the holy Bima".
6. Wind o.c., p. 317.
7. Schuurman o.c., p. 20.
8. M. Buber, *Ich und Du*. Leipzig 1923.
9. o.c., p. 49.
10. It is said that the ear through which Ali received the whispered instruction from Muhammad was the left one.
11. o.c., p. 259, 224.
12. We mention J. H. Bavinck, *Christus en de Mystick van het Oosten*, chapter III Kampen 1934.
13. P. J. Zoetmulder, S. J. *Pantheisme en Monisme in de Javaansche Soeloek-literatuur*, Nijmegen 1935.
14. We did not mention the factor of magic apprehension of the word in Javanese mysticism. In the *Serat Dewarutji* it is not important in the highest phase. Moreover, as far as I know, there is no mystic understanding of whole books in the magic way. However important magic may be in Javanism, it is the magic formula, which is used to overcome difficulties in the struggle. Any relation with revelation could not be involved.

A. G. HÖNIG.

*Makassar, Celebes, Indonesia.*

"Much confusion and uncertainty in theological schools today seems to be due to lack of clarity about the community—the Church; about its form and matter, its relations and composition. Without a definition of Church it is impossible to define adequately the work of the ministry for which the school is to prepare its students." H. Richard Niebuhr. *The Purpose of the Church and its Ministry*.

# Book Reviews

## From Missionfield to Independent Church. Dr. Hendrik Kraemer.

Report on a decisive decade in the growth of indigenous churches in Indonesia. London, SCM Press. 28s. Also Boeken-centrum, The Hague. f12.50, 1958.

This book is an English adaptation of the famous reports written by Dr. Kraemer between 1926 and 1935 on the situation of various important missionfields in Indonesia (at that time the Netherlands East Indies), viz. Ambon (Moluccas), Minahasa (North Celebes), the Bataklans in Sumatra, East and West Java, and Bali ("the world's last paradise"). The eye-opening information and daring, sound suggestions offered in these reports have greatly contributed to the rapid development of self-governing churches in Indonesia and to the rise of a new strategy of missions. However, most present-day missionaries have never had a chance of reading these reports, even in Holland, since they had been presented in strict confidence to the Netherlands Bible Society, and remained hidden in files and libraries. Outside the Dutch language area they were practically unknown.

Therefore we consider it an excellent thing that now, in connection with Dr. Kraemer's 70th birthday in 1958, a publication in English has been undertaken. Here we meet Kraemer in his full strength as missionary thinker and statesman. In his introductory note Dr. Visser 't Hooft remarks that "the missionary movement needs to be challenged and enriched by Kraemer's critique and

by his vision of its nature and method". Kraemer's theoretical aim in these reports, as he himself states it, was "to formulate, at the hand of concrete research and the concrete problems and difficulties of various missionfields, new principles of missionary strategy in a world of revolutionary transition in every respect. Moreover, to evaluate critically and constructively the missionary effort of the past". And his practical aim was "to plead forcefully for a radical change in our missionary strategy, especially in regard to a quite new relation of Western Missions with their so called Missionfields, and to make clear that striking a way of making self-governing and self-responsible Churches a fact and not only a subject of never-ending discussion and procrastination, was not only the right Christian way, the due kind of action, but already a much-belated one".

Dr. Arend van Leeuwen, himself at one time a missionary in Indonesia and now preparing a biographical survey of Kraemer's life-work in its many aspects, rearranged the reports, selecting those parts which are of more general and permanent interest. He has introduced each of them with a short explanatory note and provided them with a series of valuable annotations for the benefit of those readers whose understanding of the reports might be hampered by insufficient knowledge of the religious, cultural, political, ecclesiastical and historical background to which they are related. Dr. Kraemer's daughter and son-in-law, Mrs. and Dr. Kramers, in Hongkong, prepared the translation.

Purchase and careful reading of this book is recommended, especially to all church-leaders and missionaries in the area served by our S.E.A. Journal, not only for the general reasons stated above, but particularly with regard to the urgent need of becoming acquainted with each other's fields of work. Although the reports were drawn up before the war, they are far from antiquated. They offer a rare opportunity of gaining pointed inside information about some prominent Churches in our part of the world, each with its own complex of problems: Amboin as Asia's oldest Protestant Christian community (since the Dutch ousted the Portuguese in 1605); Minahasa, where we witness the struggle of missions to keep free from the policy of a neutral colonial state; Batakland with its largest single indigenous church in Asia, its fine missionary tradition since the days of the great pioneer Nommensen, and its confrontation both with the old *adat* and with the impact of modern times; the churches in Java in their remarkable birth and growth in the midst of a predominantly Muslim society; and Bali where the conflict between the proclamation of God's reign in Christ and the preservation of ancient Hindu culture and religion became acute.

This book should be available in every theological library in Asia.

IDO H. ENKLAAR.  
Djakarta.

### An Introduction to the Theology of the New Testament

ALAN RICHARDSON. 424pp.

S. C. M. Press. 1958 30/-

The appearance of this book has been hailed as "an event in Biblical scholarship". It is a fitting crown to the author's many contributions to Biblical theology and indeed its solid learning and comprehensive scope

suggest the prophecy that the author may soon be expected to exchange the canon's cope for the bishop's mitre. The book is excellently produced, well arranged and comprehensively indexed. Every library and everyone teaching N.T. or Biblical Theology should have it and the student who is prepared to master the somewhat frequent quotation of original languages will find himself richly rewarded. For those whose Greek and Hebrew have become rusty with the passing years a glossary would help. Dr. Richardson's approach as stated in the preface is that N.T. theology is "the framing of an hypothesis concerning the content and character of the faith of the apostolic Church". Accordingly he begins with the presuppositions of theology—faith and hearing, knowledge and revelation. These lead on to the main themes of N.T. theology, Christology and soteriology. The first is approached by studies of "the power of God unto salvation", the Kingdom of God and the Holy Spirit. The root of all Christology is found in Christ's own reinterpretation of messianship in terms of the Son of Man. This is developed in the Christology of the apostolic Church. The second theme is approached by studies of Christ and the Resurrection, Ascension and Victory of Christ. The Atonement is considered in terms of the metaphors of reconciliation, redemption, propitiation and justification and in turn it leads on to a consideration of "the whole Christ" as including the redeemed. This chapter forms a bridge to a further chapter on the Church as the Israel of God followed by chapters on the apostolic and priestly ministry, ministries within the church, the theology of baptism and finally the eucharistic theology of the N.T. Thus in sixteen chapters of approxi-

mately equal length Canon Richardson succeeds in presenting the N.T. doctrines of Christ, salvation, the Church and Sacraments as a unified whole.

Dr. Richardson ranges himself with Cullmann, V. Taylor, Manson and others in tracing the synthesis of Messianic and Servant conceptions to Jesus himself. He appears to think that the only alternative is the view of Bultmann who regards Jesus and his message as presuppositions of N.T. theology rather than part of that theology. There is a third way of approach, however, which has been developed by American scholars like F. C. Grant and John Knox. This is to recognise the centrality of the Kerygma as Richardson does but to be far more sceptical about "the messianic consciousness" of Jesus. Grant's *Introduction to N.T. Thought* and Knox's "Jesus: Lord and Christ" and "The Death of Christ" should therefore be read as a 'corrective' to Richardson's monument of impeccability.

FRANK BALCHIN.  
*Singapore.*

#### **Sacral Kingship in Ancient Israel.**

1955. Johnson A. R.: pp. VII  
156. University of Wales Press  
Cardiff. Price: 12s. 6d.

A book of 156 pages from Professor Johnson is an important event in O.T. scholarship. The discerning reader will be full of expectancy and thankful for the hard covers after so many limp monographs. He will not be disappointed. The book is a carefully documented study of those psalms which cast light on the subject of sacral kingship in Israel and also serves as an introduction to this increasingly important subject for those of us who hitherto have only encountered it in reviews and scattered references. On pages 124—126

we are given a summary of the features in the festival as celebrated in Solomon's Temple between the tenth and sixth centuries B.C., as well as the significance of the drama for the worshippers. Readers might be advised to turn to these pages first if they want some idea of where the argument will lead them. When I first read this book and was about halfway through I wrote impatiently on the inside of the back cover, "A mountain of conclusions from a molehill of evidence." This no doubt will be the reaction of anyone who is convinced that far too much prominence is being given to this whole matter of sacral kingship and the New Year Festival in Ancient Israel. On the other hand those lacking this conviction will welcome the book for its clear presentation and perhaps for its emphasis on eschatology. At least one reader has begun to see the subject in a new and more sympathetic light since reading this book and if not convinced by all Professor Johnson says, the reviewer is certain that both Old and New Testament scholars must take this and similar statements very seriously. It can also be said that one course of lectures on the Psalms will never be the same again.

DAN BEEBY.  
*Tainan, Formosa.*

#### **Theology of the Old Testament.**

Jacob, E.: Translated by A. W. Heathcote and P. J. Allcock 1958 (French edition 1955).  
pp. 368 Hodder & Stoughton Ltd. London. Price: 30s.

This latest contribution to the Theology of the Old Testament is the most useful of the ones I have read so far, although such a judgment will no doubt need revision when Eichrodt and Vriezen have been secured and read. It is fuller than

Rowley's "The Faith of Israel", more mature than Baab and has fewer of the marks of the Lexikon than Köhler's volume. There are three parts and an introduction and in some ways the introduction is the most welcome of all as it discusses historical and methodological considerations, such as theology's relation to other branches of Old Testament study and the relation of Old Testament theology to other theological studies. The three main parts follow neither Wright's demand for a theology of recital nor a covenant-centred schematization such as I understand Eichrodt adopts. Like Köhler the author follows the traditional threefold order of theology, anthropology and soteriology, although his headings are somewhat new, the second and third parts being termed "The Action of God according to the Old Testament" and "Opposition to and final triumph of God's work." The book is noteworthy for its scope and depth and for many phrases that linger in the mind and demand quotation. Such a one is the statement that "the justice of Jahweh is not of the type of the blindfolded maiden holding a balance in her hand, the justice of Jahweh extends one arm to the wretch stretched out on the ground whilst the other pushes away the one who causes the misfortunes." Perhaps the most important impression this book made on the reviewer was that inevitably and rightly the book left much undone. This is praise of the author's power to stimulate, not criticism of his work. It wasn't Dr. Jacob's task to append to his study of the Names of God sections showing how names borrowed from long dead faiths could give us pointers in our struggle to understand the Christian Church's relation to other religions. It wasn't his task but it

might be ours who live in the midst of resurgent Buddhism, Confucianism etc. Similarly the discussion of the Angel of God, the Face of God, the Glory of God and the Name of God left one hungry for a thorough study of the Old Testament preparation for the New Testament teaching about the Trinity. This is a book no Seminary library can afford to be without.

DAN BEEBY.  
*Tainan, Formosa.*

**The History of Israel**, Noth, M.:

Translated from the second ed. of *Geschichte Israels* by Stanley Godman. 1958.

Pp. VIII + 489. (A & C. Black, London. Price: 42s. 0d.)

The appearance in English of this book, already widely known and loudly praised on the Continent, is an event so important that even the ranks of Tuscany can scarce forbear to cheer. Dr. Noth's brilliance and painstaking scholarship need no advertisement and both are very evident in this book.

The contents are divided into an introduction and four parts. Part I deals with "Israel as the confederacy of the twelve tribes," Part II "The Life of Ancient Israel in the Palestinian - Syrian World," Part III is entitled "Israel under the Rule of the Great Powers of the Ancient Orient" and Part IV "Restoration, Decline and Fall". On every page there is convincing proof both of meticulous study of the biblical text and unparalleled acquaintance with the history of the surrounding nations. On some periods, perhaps particularly the Davidic and Solomonic, previous accounts may have been fuller but never superior. So much for the cheering. Let me now speak as a Tuscan. The first thing to be said to Seminary librarians is, that when ordering Noth's History it is important at the same time to order John

Bright's "Early Israel in Recent History Writing" (S.C.M. Studies in Biblical Theology, No. 19) and even if it means doing violence to the cataloguing system these two books should be placed side by side. Professor Bright's book includes an appreciation and detailed criticism of Noth's methodology and conclusions, and is an invaluable companion to the History.

Part II-IV include judgments which would not secure the assent of many Old Testament scholars. This is natural, good and praiseworthy but by and large this main section of the book does not depart radically from generally accepted conclusions. It is in Part I that the main battle must be joined. In reading this section the reviewer experienced the same sense of shock and disappointment that assailed him a few years ago when first reading Bultmann's "Kerugma and Myth." Such a sensation is not necessarily a bad thing; shock treatment can have therapeutic effects and it may be that men like Noth and Bultmann are meant to play Hume to the present day Kants, awaking them from a dogmatic Barthian slumber. Nevertheless the shock was there and remains to engender numerous questions. Are these the final throes of a dying liberalism? or has the wheel turned full circle and is it now the school of Albright rather than that of Albrecht Alt which is behind the times? Such questions are a gross oversimplification of the issues but perhaps they rise in more than one mind and perhaps those more able should provide a few answers.

Let me be more specific about Dr. Noth's theories concerning Ancient Israel. In the first place "Israel" has its beginning not in the call of Abraham, the naming of Jacob or the work of Moses; it begins only

when the twelve tribes were united and domiciled in Palestine. All that went before that time has a place in Israel's history only as traditions belonging to the twelve tribes. These traditions existed in five "blocs" originally independent but later brought together and unified under the figure of Moses whose main claim to fame apparently was that he died and had a grave—an occurrence sufficiently normal perhaps to raise doubt whether so very small a cause could have produced so very considerable a result. Nowhere is the faith of Israel given its true prominence as the creating and maintaining factor in the nation and one feels a more appropriate title to the book would have been "The Wars and Mores of the twelve tribes in Palestine." While Dr. Noth is obviously aware of the contribution which archaeology has made and is making to Old Testament studies, he seems strangely reluctant to give much prominence to any of its conclusions as far as they affect the early history of Israel; and one cannot help but wonder whether his source material is broad enough in scope and his methodology adequate to the task. A work in English to take the place of Oesterley and Robinson's two volumes still has to be written.

DAN BEEBY.  
*Tainan, Formosa.*

#### The Growth of the Church in

**Buganda.** John V. Taylor.  
London, S. C. M. Press Ltd.  
288 p. 25/- (Studies in the Life  
and growth of the younger  
churches.)

This 'attempt at understanding' is the first 'study in depth' in the series planned by the Missionary

Studies Department of IMC/WCC. Hendrik Kraemer's study of the churches in Indonesia is in the same series, but while Kraemer's work was done in the 1920's, John Taylor's field-work was done in three months in 1956, living in a hut in Kabubiro village in the parish of Kakindu in Kyagwe county, where he shared "as fully as possible in all the work and experiences of his neighbours' daily lives, visiting every home, listening to their gossip and learning their thoughts and concerns." In addition, the author spent short periods in three other villages, and several weeks in Kampala as the guest of Africans of the professional classes. Having the advantage also of knowing the language from his previous ten years' work in the area as Principal of an Anglican theological college, he was able to make the most of having a panel of African consultants, men and women from many walks of life, who helped to make the study more objective than would have been otherwise possible.

Here is what John Taylor himself calls 'the peasant's eye view' of the church, and he believes that in spite of rapidly growing industrialisation in Uganda, this is still a critical line of concern, since "the real roots of even the town dwellers run down into the soil of the clan lands and draw up vitality from half forgotten ways and wisdom of the cultivators."

Of fascinating interest is the account of the situation that awaited the arrival of the first C.M.S. missionaries, 'the groups of men and women and young boys' in the palace of the Kabaka and the great households who were soon to be 'the living cells of the Body of Christ'. Fascinating too is the account of the King himself, the Kabaka, Mutesa I, and all the conflicting interests of his enigmatic personality. Then comes

the growth of the church itself and an analysis of the process by which people were becoming Christians, in terms of what Taylor calls 'Congruence, Detachment, Demand and Crisis', in all of which the Spirit was blowing where it listed and forces were at work the missionaries knew little about. The end of the first fourteen years saw in existence a church that had come through the fires of persecution and martyrdom, and given full proof of its ministry. Then something happened. The 'policy of leading-strings', and the failure of the missionaries to trust in and work on the basis of the responsibility of African leaders, fatally undermined the responsibility of the church and sapped its strength. "The principle of tutelage in a church is revealed by any clericalism which cannot trust the laity with spiritual responsibility; by any bureaucracy in which every official is supervised by the man above him; by a centralization which only recognises as part of the church's life those things that are initiated, supported and controlled from a central office . . ." Responsibility was not dead in the church but it had been struck a serious blow, and that by 'as remarkable a group of missionaries as can be found in the annals of any mission field.' In this connection, Kraemer has a significant observation: "One of the causes of our manifold failures lies in the fact that we do not have the courage to allow a group of indigenous Christians to lead its own life in accordance with the measure of living insight which it has reached. This is the only condition whereby a person or a group . . . is able to live and grow. Our method is that we wish *them* to live by the measure of living insight that we have got." (I)

(I) p. 120 From *Mission Field to Independent Church*.

Another factor affecting the growth of the church in Buganda, was the mission policy of 'withdrawal upwards'. Missionaries handed over to African leaders, but always withdrew into a higher category in the administrative hierarchy, and this is still the stock pattern in the church. What was worse, this policy 'caught on' and applied to the best of the African leaders. The result was to draw off the best men from the parishes, while at the top, leaders were more and more out of touch with the needs of the village churches.

As one would expect, there is much in the book about Buganda customs, beliefs and mores—relationships between children and parents, men and women, the traditional world view and so on. An important section of the book deals with the question of how distinctive are Christians and the Congregation in the community, and at first the answer seems to be that there is a disconcerting lack of distinctiveness here. Yet "the disconcerting homogeneity of the mass of Christian adherents reveals, below the surface, many lines of demarcation, many points of personal and communal decision, at which some, choosing painfully to obey the voice of God, stand apart from the rest, and, in that stand, find fellowship with other confessors. The occasions of these moral and spiritual battles are innumerable . . . parent-child relationships, and in the temptations of adolescents; in the choice between drunkenness and loneliness; in the decisions about betrothal and the type of marriage, and in the struggle for stability in the midst of much marital breakdown; in the encounter with the old world-view and the needs which magic appears to meet; in the challenge of political tension, when the

choice often seems to lie between irresponsible pietism or a total surrender to the slogans and emotions of propaganda; in all these and a hundred other 'valleys of decision', men are confronting the demand inherent in the Gospel and the frontiers are being drawn."

A number of questions particularly relevant to theological education are raised. Is it possible to build one church which is really the church of all strata of society? Should there be different kinds of ministry for urban and rural parishes? Is it the tendency of Evangelical Christianity to create a bourgeoisie, leading to a consequent emphasis on training a ministry for this new class, and a possible neglect of the needs of peasant congregations? Is it a fact that only 'catholic' Christianity has taken a firm hold on peasant peoples in the past, and has done so without changing them into something else . . . And Has Christ come to fulfil or destroy . . . ?

Taylor leaves us with the big question mark that is over Africa—Can the church, by God's grace, discover a new synthesis between a saving Gospel and a total, unbroken unity of society? Southeast Asia has already lost that unity of society. For some, the old religions offer the best means of recovering it. For others, Communism! For us in the church, that question of Taylor's still remains.

This is a gracious and illuminating book, well deserving of close study, and highly relevant to many questions of church growth and missiology in Southeast Asia.

J. R. F.

**Irreligious reflections on the Christian Church.** Werner Pelz. London, S. C. M. Press Ltd. 128 p. 8/6.

'What is the good of it?' is a question we cannot answer. What is the good of theology, of the Church, of us? Only God can decide 'the good' of anything. But this forces us back on the question 'What is theology aiming at?'. This book is the author's attempt at an answer, and in the first few pages he gives his précis of the answer. "It is our fundamental task, the *raison d'être* of the church, to tell in our own human, fallible language the story of the great acts of God; to catch and reflect in our own human, fallible words the eternal Word of God. First of all and quite simply, we are here to preach." Nor is this just a job for professionals. "Every Christian is fundamentally, essentially and first of all, a witness, a herald. He therefore must be a theologian. 'Theologizing is the necessary attempt of the Church to test the word that is preached in the light of the Word of God as it is revealed to us in the words of the Bible."

These preliminary thoughts lead the author, a German pastor born and brought up in Germany, and now an Anglican vicar near Bolton, to raise a lot of questions about conventional Christianity. "How much ungodly twaddle there is, and how much Christless bustle! What is the theological significance of a whist-drive, a jumble sale, a street collection? . . . of this club or that group? Or has it never occurred to us that, whether we like it or not, all of these have a theological significance? More important: what is the significance of the parish set-up, the maintenance of an old and the building of a new cathedral, the stained glass, the robed choir, the parson's outfit . . ."

" . . . to be untheological simply means to be disobedient." This approach reminds me of a bishop in one of the Southeast Asia countries who said to me the other week: "We're not much given to theology here, we're a bit suspicious of it . . . we like to get down to the practical questions." !

This book thinks and speaks deeply about the Cross, the Bible, the grace of God, freedom, election, sin, and sex. One of the high moments in its irreligious reflections is the heavenly dialogue between the Father and the Son shortly before the Incarnation. It is a devastating answer to those who "whittle the greatest gift of God to the tiny stature of a possible human achievement" by saying in the manner of parish magazines and Christian Brains Trusts that 'To love our neighbour does not mean to like him personally but to treat him rightly.' On this question of love, the author thinks that too much can be made of the distinction between 'agape' and 'eros'. He notes that "Christians have always breathed a sigh of relief when they could point out that the love they were talking about was 'agape' and not 'eros'." "We are reminded that neither our Lord nor Paul hesitated to invoke the symbol of the bridegroom's love for the bride. "After all", he says, "the complete embrace of sexual union is the most striking, the most adequate, and, according to the Creation story, the God-willed symbol of human togetherness." It is "the supreme and crudest expression of the fact that giving is receiving."

There is much in this book to cut through conventional 'Churchianity'. It is a good book for the Christian layman, for the pastor, and for the theological teacher. Its great value is, to my mind, in its stimulation to

theological thinking—which is what the author is demanding of the church in all its activities, and a book that even begins to do this is relevant in all our churches and theological schools. This is not a tome or a treatise, but it might well stimulate some people to produce these, which from the point of view of this Journal, is something to be encouraged, whatever some other people may think about it!

J. R. F.

**Our Bible and the Ancient Manuscripts.** Sir Frederic Kenyon.

Revised by A. W. Adams.

Introduction by G. R. Driver.  
London, Eyre & Spottiswoode.  
1958. p. 352. 42/-

This classic of more than sixty years standing by the former Director and Librarian of the British Museum has been revised and brought up to date by the Dean of Divinity of Magdalen College, Oxford. When it first appeared in 1895 as a result of the publishers commissioning Kenyon to provide a work that would meet the growing demand of thoughtful laymen for an authoritative account of the subject, it was widely appreciated, and as it has gone through new editions and reprintings, it has continued to be an excellent history of the Biblical text and its transmission. Kenyon himself revised and re-wrote the book in 1939, in the light of fresh discoveries, notably the Chester-Beatty papyri which Kenyon edited in eight volumes during the years 1939 to 1941. Further discoveries—e.g. archaeological evidence relating to ancient books and writings in the Eastern Mediterranean giving a more complete picture than had been possible, and the finds in the Qumran

area which enable the 'massoretic barrier' to be penetrated by centuries, as well as the presence of some mistakes inevitable in a field so vast where Kenyon the expert papyrologist had not the same first hand expert knowledge as he had of Greek texts, have made necessary this Fifth Edition, revised and enlarged. This revision has left the original structure of the original book unaltered.

(In previous editions of this book it had been said: "There is indeed no possibility that we shall ever find manuscripts of the Hebrew text going back to a period before the formation of the text which we call the Massoretic".)

The chapter on revisions and translations since 1881 has been brought up to date, and includes among others references to Mgr. Knox's translation of the Bible, the Kleist and Lilley N.T., the work of J. B. Phillips, E. V. Rieu's Four Gospels, the American Revised Standard version and the New English translation in progress under the general direction of Dr. C. H. Dodd.

It would be useful for the work of theological teaching in this area if someone would produce a small companion volume dealing with the translations that have been in use in the churches of this area, including translations that are being made or requiring to be made as the church extends its mission in these countries. In any case, Sir Frederic Kenyon's book should be in all our libraries, in this 1958 edition. A companion volume might well be "The Bible in its ancient and English versions" edited by H. W. Robinson. (Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1940.)

J. R. F.

**The Epistles to Colossians and to Philemon.** The Cambridge Greek Testament. An introduction and Commentary, by C. F. D. Moule. Cambridge University Press, 1958. 8/6. 170 p. Paper.

This is a new series, revising the New Testament volumes in the long established Cambridge biblical commentaries, the Cambridge Bible for Schools, and the Cambridge Greek Testament for schools and Colleges. The new series, under the general editorship of the Lady Margaret's Professor of Divinity in the University of Cambridge, who also contributes this volume, in a very attractive format, and embodying the results of the last fifty years' scholarship, aims to bring out the theological and religious content of the New Testament in the setting of the life and worship of the early church. This volume has a very useful introduction dealing with the religious thought of the epistles under discussion, with sections on Christ. The Church, Becoming a Christian, Prayer and Ethics. In discussing the background of these epistles, Dr. Moule has no doubts of the Pauline authorship since he believes the Colossian error could well have appeared in Paul's time. There is an appreciative account of the brilliant suggestions of Professors E. J. Goodspeed and John Knox, which the author does not find altogether convincing, though he accepts Knox's view that Paul is asking for Onesimus to be an active evangelist, and agrees with Knox and P. N. Harrison that there is no cogent reason against identifying the freed slave with the bishop of the same name addressed by Ignatius. Teachers of N.T. and Biblical Theology in Southeast Asia will find this a useful little book, with the Greek text in handy form in the notes, pro-

viding a solid linguistic basis for the commentary.

J. R. F.

**Atlas of the Bible.** Lucas Hendricus Grollenberg. Translated and edited by Joyce M. H. Reid and H. H. Rowley. Edinburgh, Thomas Nelson and Sons Ltd., 1956 reprinted 1957. 165 p. 70/-.

This book is a delight to the eyes and to the mind, with its four hundred excellent photographs, thirty five maps in eight colours, and its clear organisation of material which together enable the reader to feel that he is living with the people of the Bible and their neighbours. As "the Hebrew prophets regarded their people as a person," the Atlas first sets the scene of the beginnings, then takes you through the stages of birth and infancy, youth, independence, backsliding, reflection, death and resurrection, marked by the coming of Christ and the growth of the Church.

One of the weaknesses of historical Christianity at times has been its failure to be 'earthened'. With this Atlas at hand, no one has any excuse for divorcing his thinking about the 'mighty acts of God' from very definite places and times. This book is a wonderful example of the best kind of 'visual-aids'. We are enabled to see the places as they were and are today, and we are helped to pin-point all the Bible places that can be identified with any degree of certainty. The index of twenty six pages gives the name of every town and village, every mountain and valley, every region, river, country and people which occurs in the Bible, and tells us how certain we can be about identifying each place.

Here is history, geography, archaeology, cartography, photography and Biblical scholarship put to the service of understanding the living Word.

Father Grollenberg's original edition in French was published in Holland in 1954, and was immediately acclaimed. This English translation by Mrs. Joyce Reid achieves the best success of not reading like a translation at all, and for the technical aspects of Biblical scholarship in this English edition, the publishers have been fortunate in having the experience and knowledge of Professor H. H. Rowley.

This is a book for all theological libraries in Southeast Asia, as it is for libraries everywhere.

J. R. F.

**The New Testament in Modern English** translated by J. B. Phillips. London, Geoffrey Bles Ltd. 45/- 537 p.

**The New Testament** rendered from the original Greek with explanatory notes, by James A. Kleist, S. J. and Joseph L. Lilly, C. M. Milwaukee, The Bruce Publishing Company. \$5.50. 690 p.

**Holy Bible.** Revised Standard Version. Published by the Division of Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Edinburgh, Thomas Nelson and Sons Ltd., 1957. 12/6 981 p.

A brief notice must serve for these important translations, which are already well known. Phillips as we know from his own foreword, set himself three standards for a good translation: it must not sound like a translation at all; the translator must work with the least possible intrusion of his own personality; he must be able to produce in the hearts and minds of readers an effect equivalent to that produced by the author upon his original readers. Phillips has measured up to his own tests, and

the increasing use of his translations round the world is something for which to be very thankful, especially when one thinks of the way scripture is venerated in many churches, but not understood, because its cutting edge has been blunted by a language people no longer use.

The Roman Catholic translators of the New Testament had similar ideas in relation to American Roman Catholics. As one has said, "I have aimed at doing what, after all, every Catholic priest is actually doing in the pulpit Sunday after Sunday. First, he reads . . . from the official Rheims-Challoner version. Next he lays down the book and launches forth into an exposition . . . in language 'understood of the people'." Both are dominated by the desire to communicate in an idiom familiar to their readers and hearers. A detailed comparison of these two translations would be an interesting exercise, but unnecessary here. One observation might be made, however, that is to share in J. B. Phillips' gratitude "that here in the New Testament, at the very heart and core of our Faith, Christians are far more at one than their outward divisions would imply." The present interest in Biblical studies in the Roman communion, of which the Kleist-Lilly translation is an example, is the brightest aspect of Roman-non-Roman relationships, which otherwise seem as mutually exclusive as ever.

The R.S.V., authorised in 1937 "to embody the best results of modern scholarship as to the meaning of the scriptures, and express this meaning in English diction which is designed for use in public and private worship and preserve those qualities which have given to the King James version a supreme place in English literature", represents a great gain in understanding as compared with the Authorised version, and should find an increasing use among English-speaking Christians in Southeast Asia.

J. R. F.

**Steps to Christian Understanding:**

Edited by J. R. W. Bevan,  
Oxford University Press, London,  
1958 xii & 212 pp. 15s.

This book is edited by a teacher of religions and philosophy in a Technical School in Britain. It is divided into three parts: (1) God and the World; (2) God and Man; (3) Doctrines of the Christian Faith. These parts are preceded by an introductory chapter by Dr. W. R. Matthews and ended with a concluding chapter by Dr. Nathaniel Micklem.

These contributors are only two of the dazzling galaxy of distinguished Christians, each one an expert in his own field, including C. A. Coulson, Herbert Butterfield, S. H. Hooke, David Cairns, Norman Snaith, Henry Balmforth, S. P. T. Prideaux, F. W. Dillistone and J. E. Fison.

This book is addressed to Christian students in Sixth Forms and Technical Schools and is probably very suitable for students in Britain who, in spite of the challenge of secular education are familiar with the Christian tradition. But Christian students in Asia have to face in addition to the secular challenge, the lack of a Christian tradition and environment and the presence of non-Christian religions. Thus, whilst it is necessary to help students in Malaya for example, in the last year of secondary school to a better understanding of their Christian faith, this book is not entirely suitable. In other words, the needs of students here are even more complex. It is not just simply the understanding of the Christian faith in the context of a secular education, but in a wider context of contesting religions and against a suspicion of Christianity as an alien faith and a bulwark of Western domination.

The language used in the book is by no means simple, and the Asian Sixth Form student will find it extremely heavy going. One wonders whether his counterpart in Britain, in spite of his familiarity with the

English tongue, will not find it equally difficult.

This book is however much more suitable as an aid to the teacher teaching the Christian Faith to Sixth Form students, and as such can be strongly recommended.

S. T. PETER LIM.  
*Singapore.*

**Religious Education in the Secondary**

**Modern School.** By Margaret Avery, Surrey. The Religious Education Press, 128 pp. 7s. 6d.

Miss Avery is well-known for her contributions in the field of religious education and is eminently qualified to write this book, which is the result of the Report of the Research Committee of the Institute of Christian Education on *Religious Education in Schools*. This Report showed that the needs and potentialities of secondary modern pupils demanded fuller treatment, and the result is this very practical book, which is certainly not a rehash of her earlier book, *Teaching Scripture*.

Miss Avery deals with the problems of developing a syllabus and discusses the various approaches and the application of the syllabus in the Younger, Middle and Upper Forms. The next part of the book which deals with approaches to definite sections of the syllabus no matter how it is arrived at—the Bible, Church History, Christian Doctrine and Christian Ethics—is most instructive.

The Asian teacher who has little access to religious education libraries, and is not well served by bookshops, will find this material, and the suggestions in the Appendix most useful.

S. T. PETER LIM.  
*Singapore.*

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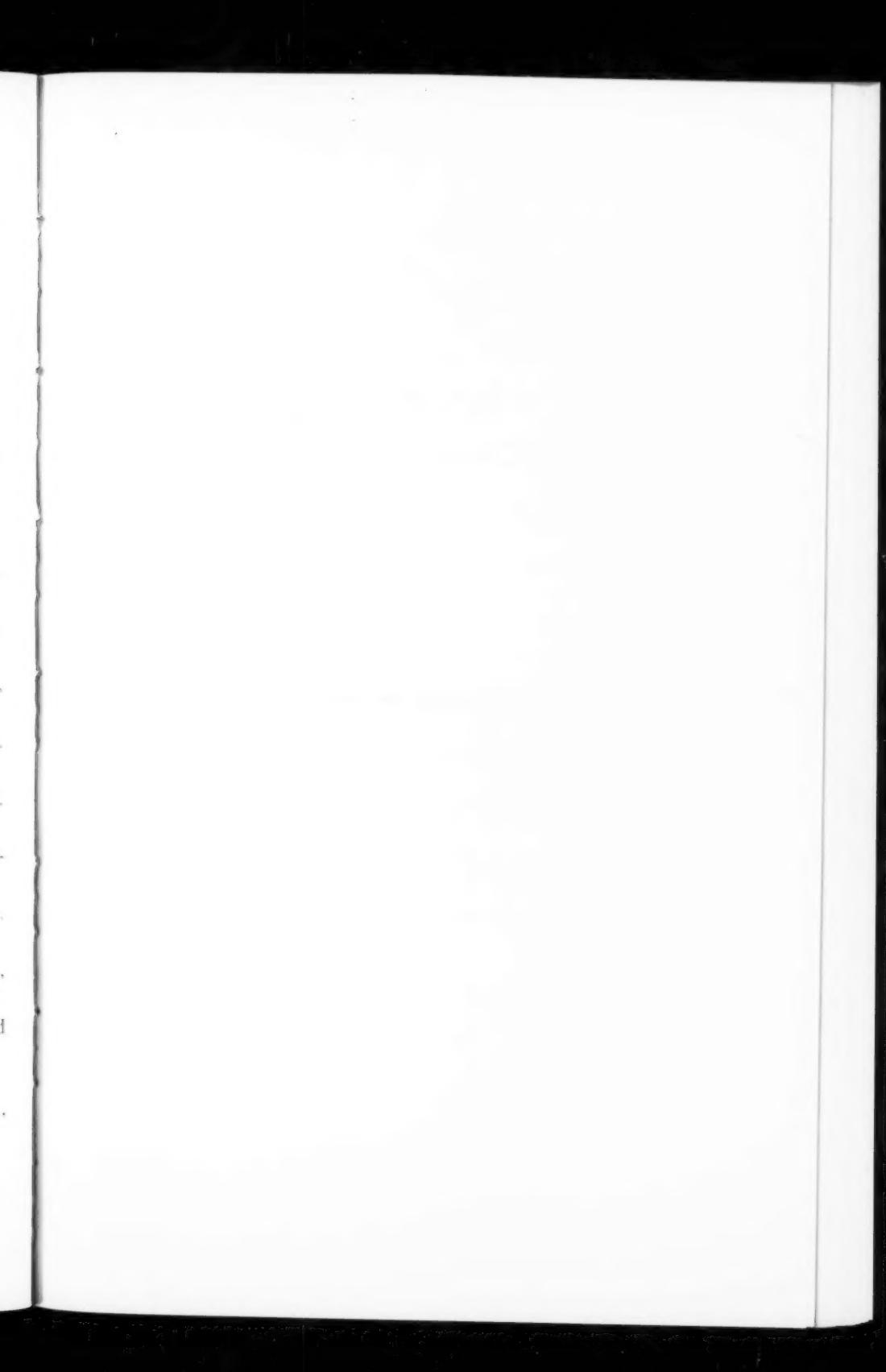
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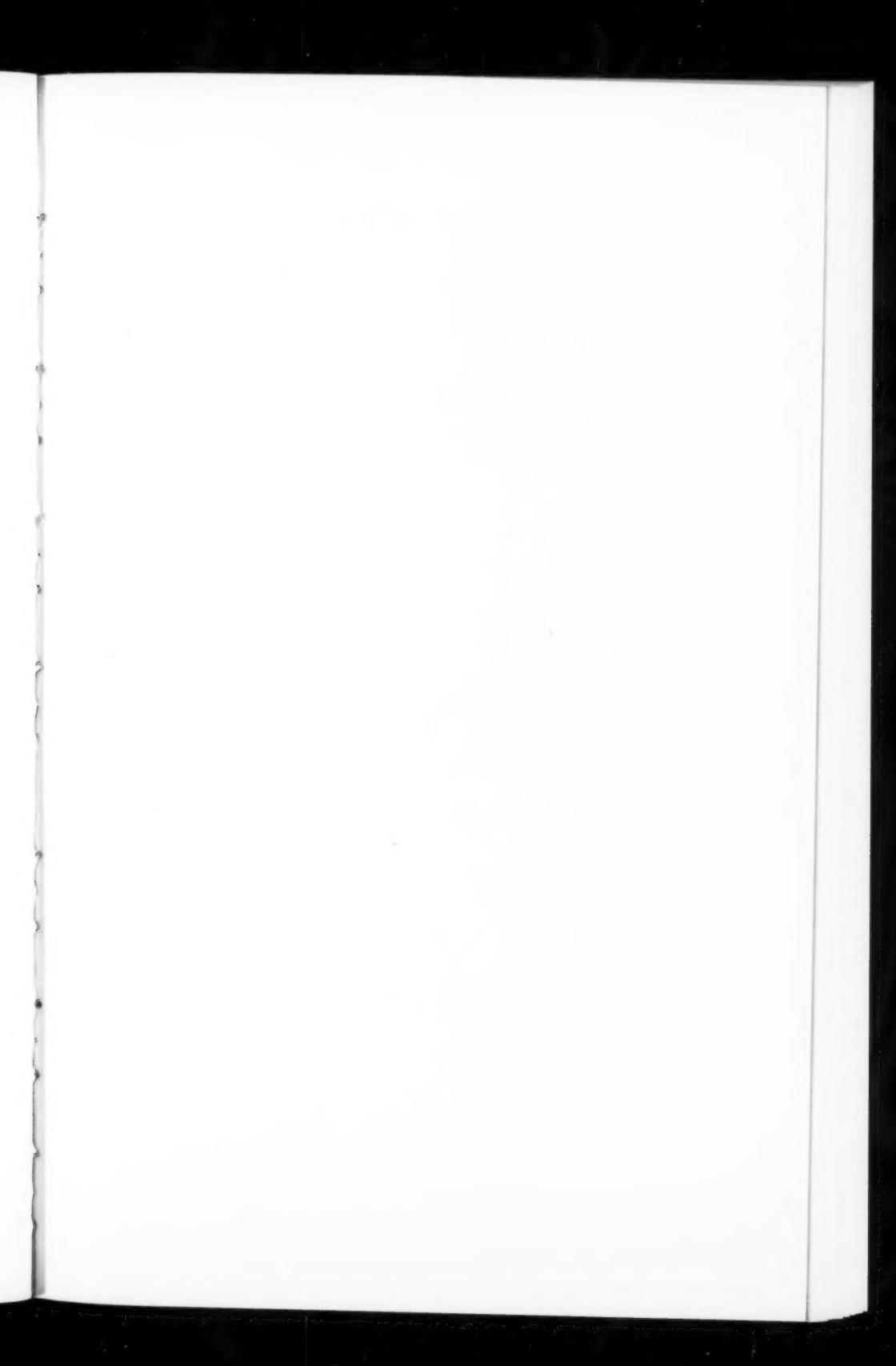
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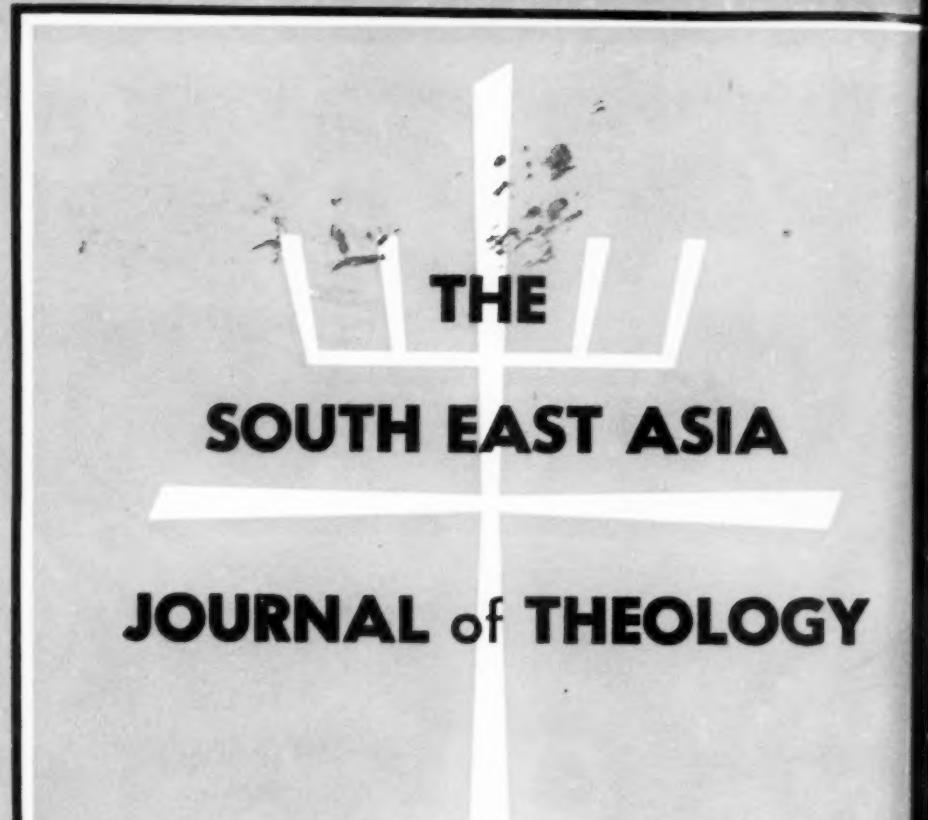
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